

VOLUME XII.

[FEBRUARY.]

NUMBER 9.

THE

RELIGIOUS MONITOR,

AND

EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY:

DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION,

AS SET FORTH IN THE

Formularies of the Westminster Divines,

AND WITNESSED FOR BY THE

ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA.

REV. JAMES MARTIN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

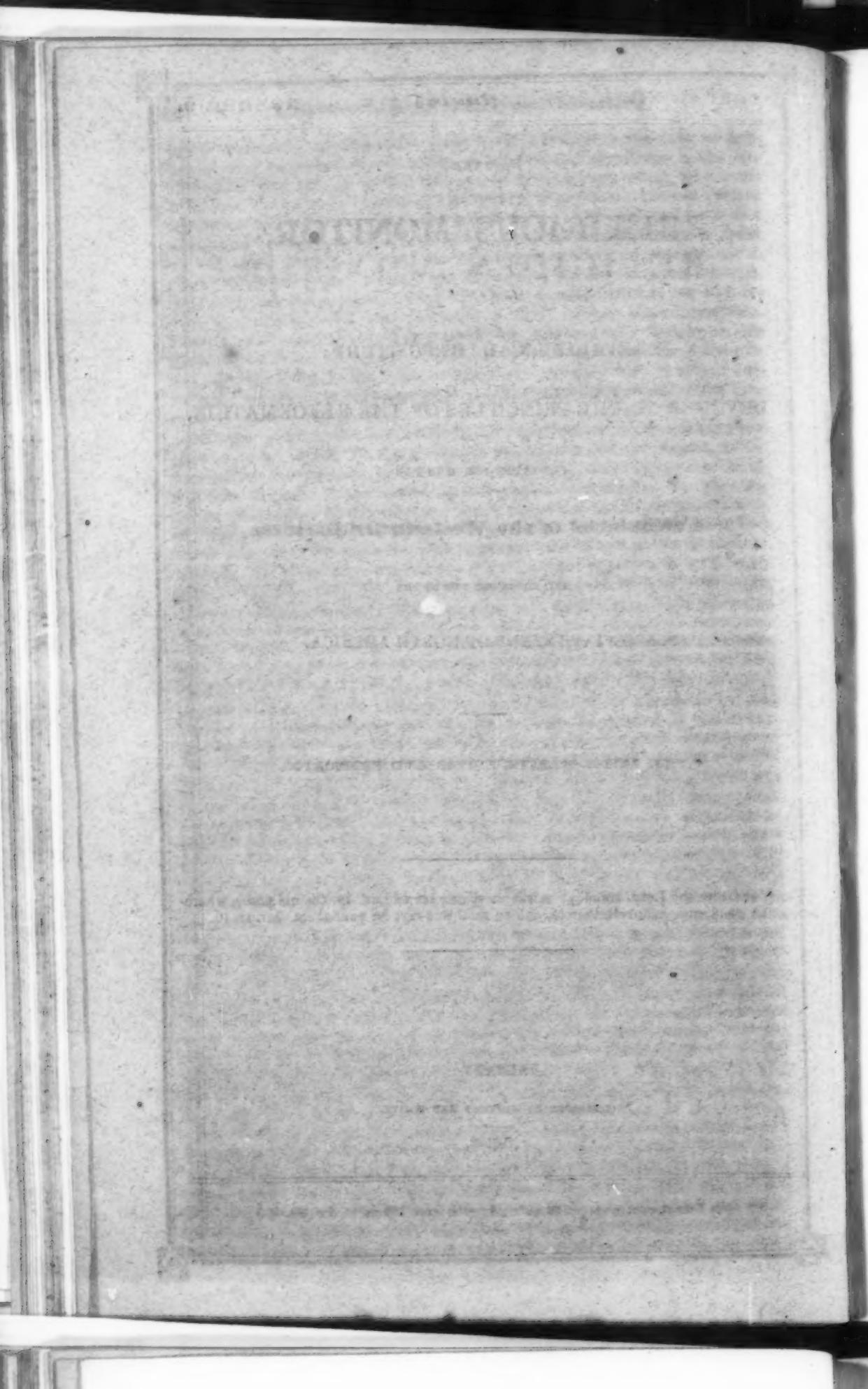
Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jer. vi. 16.

ALBANY:

PRINTED BY HOFFMAN AND WHITE.

1835-6.

03- Two sheets; postage 100 miles, 3 cents; over 100 miles, 6 cents. -40



THE
RELIGIOUS MONITOR,
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FEBRUARY, 1836.

ART. I. *On the nature and extent of the obligations assumed in Religious Covenanting.*

[It seems, that some little controversy has arisen, in a certain section of our church, respecting the extent of the obligations assumed in Religious Covenanting. The nature of this controversy may be sufficiently learned from the article below. We cannot say that we altogether coincide with some of the views expressed by our Correspondent; although we do not wish to meddle with this affair. We may state, however, that we are rather surprised to find him denying the position, that "the law of God binds us to perform impossibilities." He must be aware that this is the *popular ground* taken by Hopkinsians, and which has so mightily contributed to their success; although, to do him justice, he has explained himself in an entirely different manner from them. But in that part of his paper, if we are not greatly deceived, he completely overthrows the main pillar of his own argument. He had all along been contending, that although the law requires perfect obedience, yet inasmuch as there was no promise of grace, given, to enable us to yield that perfect obedience, therefore, it would be folly and rashness to vow it. But now he contends, if we understand him, that the law requires nothing, that there is not a promise, in Christ, of grace to perform. If so, then, there is a promise given of grace to enable a person *perfectly* to keep the law; for on his own admission *perfection* is required by the law. Hence he nullifies all the force of his own argument. Besides, in his illustration of the point, he confounds mere physical impossibilities with those that are moral; but it is only the latter, to which the objection, he is answering, has a respect. It is our decided opinion, notwithstanding of all that our Correspondent urges to the contrary, that the law of God demands of us the performance of moral impossibilities: For it says, "be ye perfect as your father in heaven is perfect"—"thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind and thy neighbor as thy self." There is no grace promised to make the performance of these things *possible* in the present life. Indeed these things are demanded of the Heathen, who have not the gospel and consequently have no promise of grace held forth to them. Their performance of them is, therefore, confessedly impossible. But we will not enter into the argument with our respected Correspondent. However, our pages will be open for a *reply* to this article by some of those who have ranked themselves on the other side of the question; and since their views have been impugned, perhaps it becomes necessary that they should step forward and defend or explain them. But let their reply be short, as we do not wish to occupy our pages with a long controversy on this subject.]

MR. EDITOR—

A sentiment of late obtains ground in some sections of our church, and is advocated in the Monitor, in Vol. X., in a paper entitled "Public Social Covenanting," on which I ask the liberty, through your Miscellany, to pass a few remarks. It appears to me to be a new doctrine taught in the Secession Church. And for this reason I believe that it is entitled to particular attention. The sentiment in question is this, "That it belongs

to the covenanter coming under solemn vows to God in the duty of public religious covenanting, to engage to give perfect obedience to the law of God." And according to it they are held to be in an error, who teach or believe the contrary doctrine, viz: that it is universal but not perfect obedience that is to be engaged to in this duty. As it belongs to us as a witnessing body, engaged in bearing testimony for precious truth, to speak all the same thing, and with one mind, and one mouth, to endeavor to glorify God, even the Father, it would seem to me that it would be highly proper that the sentiment itself should be enquired into, to see how far it agrees, or disagrees, with the word of God, and our subordinate standards; more especially as it is avowed by numbers and taught in the Monitor, as above mentioned. And perhaps a free discussion of the subject, by both sides, in the spirit of meekness, the only way in which controversy on religious subjects is to be managed, might subserve the interests of truth in this particular.

In order to bring the matter as fairly into view as possible, what I propose to do is: *First*, To show what is the doctrine of our church, as expressed in her public standards on the subject, which I believe to be altogether opposite to the sentiment referred to. *Secondly*, To give the judgment of some of the most approved writers of the Secession Church, in reference to the mind of our church on the subject; and also their own views expressed by them without reference had to our public standards. *Thirdly*, To show my own reasons why I cannot agree with said sentiment; and, *Fourthly*, To answer some objections which have been made, or may be made to the contrary opinion, and which have been advanced in support of the sentiment itself.

1st. The doctrine of our church on the subject, in her public standards, may be learned from the Westminster Confession of Faith, chap. xxii, entitled "Of lawful Oaths and Vows," section 3d. "Whosoever taketh an oath ought duly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act and therein to avouch nothing but what he is fully persuaded is the truth. Neither may any man bind himself by oath to any thing but what is good and just, and what he believeth so to be, *and what he is able and resolved to perform.*" And sect. 7. "No man may vow to do any thing forbidden in the word of God, or what would hinder any duty therein commanded, or which is not in his own power, *and for the performance of which he hath no promise or ability from God.*" In the first of these quotations a person is to engage to what he is able and resolved to perform, and nothing else. In the second, what he has not in his own power, and for the performance whereof he hath no promise or ability from God, he is not to engage to.

In the Act concerning the doctrine of grace, which is a standard work of the Secession Church; speaking of the connexion between God's covenant of grace, and our covenant of duties; to shew what influence the covenant of grace has upon our covenants of duty, it is declared that it has an influence, "In respect of the promise of the covenant of grace as it is a covenant promising all grace both habitual and actual. (Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27.) Grace for performing every duty required in the precept of the law is given forth to us in the promise of the gospel: And as we cannot set about vowed or resolving to perform any duty required in the law without the grace promised in the gospel: so the grace here promised is to be apprehended and depended upon by faith as the great encouragement to vow and resolve upon obedience saying, (Psalm cxix. 106,) "I have sworn and I will perform that I will keep thy righteous judgments." And also, "In respect of the furniture we have in our new covenant head, the Lord Jesus Christ. Having in him righteousness for acceptance, and strength for assistance in every duty, and particularly in solemn vowed of obedience unto him. The spirit of all grace being above

measure in our glorious head for our use and behoof: We are called to be "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus;" to be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might," by whom strengthening we can do all things. This furniture we have always in him as our New Covenant Head, and always access to the benefit of it by faith, the proper language whereof is, "surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." And as without this faith it is impossible to please God by any duty and service; so by this faith we are in case to please God and serve him spiritually and acceptably."

Again, "so as for the great work of covenanting to serve and obey him we may with humble confidence set about it in the faith of this new covenant furniture we have in Jesus Christ; saying as it is in Psalm lxxi. 18, "I will go in strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness even of thine only." According to the mind of the Associate Presbytery, as expressed in this part of our standards, nothing is to be engaged to by us, but what we have strength in Christ our Head to perform, and we are not to go in our covenant engagements beyond what the promise secures in this way. If we could say that the promise secures grace to enable us to obey the law of God perfectly, then may we engage to render a perfect obedience to the law but not otherwise.

In the New Exhibition of the Secession Testimony in Scotland, on the head that treats of public religious covenanting, it is said that in this duty the covenanters "profess to renounce all hope of life from the covenant of works; to take hold of the covenant of grace, and to devote themselves to the Lord, and in the strength of promised grace, engage faithfully to cleave to him, to hold fast his truths, to perform the duties which they owe to God, &c." Our Testimony speaks as follows, "we declare that it is our duty, relying on the grace that is in Christ Jesus, to engage jointly in a public solemn covenant, &c." And in all the covenant bonds that have been in use in the Secession Church, we find her speaking in still more express language on this head. In the original bond of Seceders covenanters say, "WE do, with our hands lifted up to the MOST HIGH GOD, hereby profess, and before God, angels and men, solemnly declare, that through the grace of God, and according to the measure of his grace given unto us, we do with our whole hearts take hold of the Lord Jesus Christ, &c." In the bond contained in the New Exhibition it runs, "WE do, &c. solemnly declare, that through the grace of God, and according to the measure of his grace given unto us, we desire to take hold with our whole hearts of the Lord Jesus Christ, &c." And in the bond contained in our Testimony, covenanters speak in the same language. "WE do, &c. solemnly declare, that through the grace of God, and according to the measure of his grace given unto us, &c." A solemn and most guarded attempt is made in all the three to speak in as scriptural a manner as possible, and to let covenanters know that they are not to engage in this duty to do any thing more than there is grace in the promise to enable them to perform; nor further than that grace is given out to them by Christ for this purpose.

2d. In laying before your readers the mind of approved writers of the Secession on this subject, I shall first refer to Dr. Anderson, in his explanation of the bond in his Catechism on the subject of covenanting, wherein he says, "No obedience to the law of works is acceptable to God but that which is absolutely perfect, whereas imperfect obedience to the law of Christ, if it be sincere and proceed from true faith, is acceptable to him;" and puts the question, "May they (believers) not expect to be enabled in this life to keep the commandments of God perfectly?" and answers it as follows: "No; they have engaged and hope to keep them *no otherwise than as God has promised to enable them to do so. He has not*

promised to enable them in this life to keep his law perfectly, but to keep it acceptably, and to go on to perfection, &c."

Allan, in his sermons on the subject of covenanting, says, "With regard to the extent of people's engagements to duty, we observe that they ought to bear some correspondence to the extent of the divine law. God's commandment the Psalmist declares is exceeding broad. Broad, however, as it is, our engagements should reach to the full extent of it. Perfect obedience being absolutely unattainable by any mere man in the present state *it were the most daring presumption for any one to engage to it.* But perfect obedience is one thing, and an universal obedience quite another. The former is impossible, the latter is both attainable and a matter of duty."

Ralph Erskine, in his Sermon on Gospel Holiness, says, "The command of the covenant of works is Do and live; but in the hands of Christ it is Live and do; the command of the law of works is Do or else be damned; but in the hand of Christ the law is, I have delivered thee from hell, therefore Do; the command of the law of works is Do in thine own strength, but the law in the hand of Christ is, I am thy strength, my strength shall be perfected in thy weakness, therefore Po. The command is materially the same, yet the form is different. The command of the covenant of works is Do perfectly that you may have eternal life; but now in the hand of Christ the form is, I have given thee eternal life in me by my doing and therefore *Do as perfectly as you can through my grace, till you come to a state of perfection.*"

Brown, of Haddington, in his Bible Dictionary, on the word OATH, says, "The law of God binds all men to absolute perfection in holiness, be they as incapable of it as they will. But no man can *without mocking and tempting God, bind himself by oath to any thing but what he is able to perform.* While God remains God his law can demand no less than absolute perfection in holiness. While his word remains true no mere man since the fall, in this life, can possibly attain to it, and therefore must never vow it."

The Marrow of Modern Divinity, which though it is not a Seceder work, is yet a display of the truth in general in accordance with the doctrines of Seceders, and ranks next to the standards of the Secession church in point of doctrine, may be heard on the subject; where Neophytus puts the question to Evangelista, "But will God in Christ accept of my obedience if it be not perfect?" which is answered thus by Evangelista, "Yea neighbor Neophytus, you being a justified person, and so it not being in the case of justification, but in case of childlike obedience, I may without fear of danger say unto you, God will *accept the will for the deed, and will spare you as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.*"

It is true that two of these writers, in the quotations which have been used, do not say that we are not to promise a perfect obedience to the law of God, for they do not treat of the subject of covenanting in the places whence the words quoted are taken, but they speak what amounts to the same thing, as they shew that a perfect obedience to the law of God, no man can give, and that the obedience of the believer is accepted with God though it is not perfect, which is as much as to say that he is not to promise what he cannot give.

3d. The reasons I would assign why I cannot agree with the sentiment in question are,

1. That promises rightly made are solemn engagements to do what the promiser has both inclination and ability to do, according to the opinion of all writers on the subject of morals; and without both this inclination and ability, the person who makes them would be insulting a fellow-creature to come under them. It would be a still higher affront put upon

the God of truth. It would be to all intents and purposes lying to God, especially if done under a conviction, that what he promised he would never be able to perform.

2. The fact that God will accept the imperfect obedience of the believer rendered in faith according to the ability bestowed upon him makes it evident that no engagement to perfect obedience is required in this duty or expected; because if it were required he would not be accepted in a less measure of obedience rendered to God.

3. It is a sentiment that is greatly discouraging to the people of God going forward in this duty, while the Lord's manner of dealing with persons in calling them forward to duty, is to remove discouragements out of their way, which he does by telling them that he calls them to no duties whatever, but what he has grace for them in the promise to enable them to perform. To remove discouragements he connects commands with promises; making the latter always to run parallel with the former. He makes it the duty of ministers of the gospel to make the way of duty clear and easy; to cast up the high way and gather out the stones. But by teaching such a sentiment they would be throwing stones in the way, and spreading difficulties before tender souls which they could not easily overcome. I have gone the way of this duty myself. But were I to engage in it again, and told that by engaging in it I had to come under a promise to render a perfect obedience to the law of God, whilst that obedience to it I could not possibly give, though the command to the duty appeared very plain, I must be tempted to doubt of a mistake somewhere, as it would be so contrary to the Lord's usual ways to his people, in calling them to duty. And I do not see but that others must be in the same difficulty here with myself.

4. It is a departure from the marrow scheme of doctrine which makes privilege to go before duty, and to keep, in all cases, pace with it. Here there would be duty without privilege; because while this perfect obedience, a person is to render to the law of God, according to such a sentiment, is made his duty, and he is to come under solemn engagements to give it, he is left without strength for it, contrary to the promise of God which proportions strength always to the believers day.

5. Such an engagement come under in this duty would not be in accordance with the manner and spirit in which persons are to essay the duty itself. "Thou shalt swear the Lord liveth," is the command that is given in respect to the observance of the duty as in itself, and along with this we are to engage to all duties we owe to him as one who has supreme authority over us, and an undisputed right to our services. But the manner in which this is to be done is "in truth, in righteousness, and in judgment." Coming under such engagement, however, we would be swearing neither in truth, in righteousness, or in judgment: not in truth because we would be swearing to what we never could perform; nor in righteousness because we would be swearing to what we never would perform, and know that we never could perform in this life; nor in "judgment," because a person could not well be considered as swearing in judgment when he swears to perform a duty, which we have neither in ourselves nor in Christ our head strength to perform, while we are in this imperfect state. We are to go about this as well as all other duties in faith. But we have not in the whole word of God a ground for faith to act upon, in coming under such an engagement as this. The engagement come under in this duty is to be entered into under a resolution to perform it. But what man, who is not an high flying Arminian in principle, would come under a resolution to keep the law of God in this life perfectly? And who has any warrant from the word of God to come under such a resolution.

6. It is contrary to the whole tenor of scripture, which as I have already stated, connects commands with promises, and secures equal ability

for the greatest duties, as for the least: and also secures that the very thing commanded and which it is the duty of the Lord's people to engage to shall be done. A few of the passages which have a more particular bearing on the point I will now produce: and I will have more respect, in bringing them forward, to the order of their connexion than to the order in which they stand in the written record. They are as follows:

Psalm lxxi. 16 "I will go in strength of the Lord God, &c." which is in substance the language of a covenanter both at the time he is coming under vows to God, and after he has come under these vows; and it may be paraphrased thus, "As strength is given I will perform, and I will rely on God himself for it." This being in substance the language he speaks when he comes under vows, he promises no further, and is to promise no further than he has grace and strength in God's promise, and in Christ his head to secure that he may perform.

Deut. xxxiii. 25, "As thy days so shall thy strength be." If a minister of the gospel were to take this as his text; on that head which would treat of a person's *day* as mentioned in the text, *a day of duty* would very naturally come into view, as what, in discussing the subject, was to be treated of; and the word *day* referring to the present life in all the varied circumstances of it and situations we may be in; the promise must apply to these circumstances and secure grace answerable unto them: And while we engage to do the duties connected with them, it must be in the hope and belief that we engage to nothing impossible for us in these circumstances.

Phil. iv. 13, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me," and 2 Cor. xii. 9, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is perfected in weakness." From these two passages compared, we learn that the grace of Christ strengthening believers, and their duty go together, so that they are called to no duty but what they have grace in the promise and in Christ their head to enable them to discharge, and they are to engage to none, in respect to which, this grace is not secured. But there is not grace secured in the promise to enable us to keep the law of God perfectly.

Psalm lxxvi. 11. "Vow and pay unto the Lord your God, &c." Our vowing to God and paying are to be of equal extent as parts of Christian duty. But who can say that if he vows to give perfect obedience to the law of God he can pay it? If a person is assured that he is unable to pay such a vow, by what law of God is he warranted to come under it?

Isaiah xix. 21. "They shall vow unto the Lord and perform it." And Psalm lxxv. 1. "To thee shall the vow be performed." Neither of these promises of the word of God are true promises of what shall be, if perfect obedience to the law of God is what men vow to give in the duty of public covenanting: For our Shorter Catechism rightly tells us, in answer to that question, "Is any man able perfectly to keep the law of God?" that "No man is able in this life perfectly to keep the law of God, but doth daily break it, in thought, word and deed." And the whole Word of God, together with observation and experience, concurs to show that this is a solemn and undoubted truth.

But one passage seems particularly to inform us, that the engagement we come under in covenanting is an engagement to keep the whole law, and yet, that it is not an engagement beyond what we are able through grace to perform. Hence it is not an engagement to render perfect obedience to the law of God. Says the Psalmist, Psalm cxix. 106. "I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments." Here is a resolution distinct from the resolution or engagement entered into by him when he engaged particularly, and, likely on some occasion not mentioned, formally in the duty of covenanting; or a declaration of

his expectation that he would be able to perform his oath; which intimates to us his belief, as an inspired saint of God, and recorded for our instruction, that what he had engaged to he was able, and in this life too, to perform: And the word of God is our sure guide in these things.

One passage more I shall refer to. It is in the words of the Holy Ghost, by Solomon, in Eccl. v. 5, "Better it is that thou shouldst not vow than that thou shouldst vow and not pay." Here is a barrier set in the way of our engaging in this duty, which I cannot see how a tender conscience can get over, upon the principle necessarily involved in such a sentiment as is under consideration. For my own part, I cannot for the present see any other possible way to surmount it, than by the promises, as stepping stones by which we may rise above the common level of human weakness and corruption to the height of this great obstacle, which otherwise would seem to be a discouragement which a tender conscience could not easily overcome, and by this means we can get easily over it. For, relying on these promises, we may say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me." I can overcome these discouragements in the way of being enabled, through the grace of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to make my vows and perform them in a manner that will be pleasing to him. Such language presents to us a very solemn warning indeed. It teaches us, both how we should be careful in making our vows, and also in our endeavor to perform them, relying on that grace that is in Christ our head for this purpose. But taking the promise with us, which secures grace answerable to our day, we need not despair. Speaking to our own hearts, in an appropriation to ourselves of the grace that is in the promise in the words of Paul just now referred to, we may go forward and be assured that what we vow in agreeableness to his command, we will be enabled to pay.

I proceed now to consider objections—

1st. "The covenant of works, it may be said, was a covenant of duty. But in that covenant man was bound to perfect obedience. By what law is he loosed?" Answer: The covenant of works was a covenant of duty in a different way from the covenant, churches enter into. That was a covenant man was to keep for life. This covenant we are to keep from life and in love, and as persons in union to Christ, and in the strength of grace derived from him, our head of life and fulness: and accordingly, as that life of grace here is not perfected in us, we are not expected by God to be able to yield a perfect obedience to his law, and of consequence, not to promise what we cannot give in this world; because in doing so, in the duty of covenanting, we would be swearing neither *in truth* nor in judgment, according to the manner in which we are commanded to swear, the Lord liveth. If it is said "If in that covenant man was bound to perfect obedience, by what law is he loosed?" Answer; I think the Apostle tells us, when he speaks of the believer as divorced from the law as his first husband; namely, as a covenant of works, and married to Christ; or as being no more under the law but under grace. To be no more under the law is to be delivered from it as a covenant of works; and to be under grace, to be obeying it from love, and according to the measure of grace given unto us from Christ for this purpose.

2d. "The act of public covenanting is the act of yielding consent to the law of God. But that law requires perfect obedience: Therefore we are in covenanting to engage to this." Answer: The law of God, as a covenant of works, requires perfect obedience in order to justification. But as we are to give our consent to it, in public covenanting, it is not as a covenant of works, but as it is a rule of life in the hand of Christ as Mediator. And our obedience being to be given to it in love, it is to be given in dependence on Christ himself; and our promise or

engagement to this obedience, being a promise or engagement to give it in his strength, supposes that we are only to engage to a dependence on him for strength, and to an obedience to be performed by us in this way, according to the measure of the grace he confers upon us. The believer being delivered from the commanding and condemning power of the law as a covenant of works, and being only under law to Christ, supposes that he is to give obedience to it, from love to Christ, in subjection to him and dependence upon him; and while, through his present frailties and imperfections he fails in many things, this serves not to bring wrath upon him before God, because Christ has fulfilled the law for him, and his acceptance is through Christ and not at all through himself; so that the numberless shortcomings he is guilty of do not affect his state before God.

3d. "Those who only agree to yield obedience so far as they may be assisted, agree to yield imperfect obedience. But imperfect obedience is forbidden by the law of God; Therefore, &c." The language of covenanters is virtually neither more nor less than this, "I will go in strength of the Lord God, making mention of his righteousness, even of his only." If that will give perfect obedience they engage to it. If not, they do not and dare not engage to it; for to go on, in the engagements they come under in covenanting, in their own strength would be sinful; and also to attempt to fulfil these engagements in their own strength would be sinful. If we can say that perfect obedience to God's law in this life is to be expected of those who come under engagements to give it, we will have reason to say, that perfect obedience we are to promise in the duty of covenanting: But as such an obedience is not to be expected of any who come under vows to God, it follows that we are not to promise it.

4th. "Promised grace is not the rule of obligation. It indeed tells the fact, that further men will never perform; but the moral law binds them to perform more; and will the divine promise be an excuse to any in agreeing to perform less than the law requires?" Answer: As the law is a covenant of works, it indeed binds to a perfect obedience, in order to live upon the footing of that obedience to it. But as it is in Christ's hand as a rule of life for his people, it goes no further than the promise meets them with an engagement, on Christ's part, to bestow upon them grace sufficient for whatever duties it enjoins: For throughout the Scriptures, whatever duty is commanded of God there is a corresponding promise of grace to enable us to the performance of it; and the command and the promise are inseparably connected. This is good marrow doctrine, and a doctrine that holds a prominent place in the system of doctrine maintained by the Secession church. If such is the case, then, that the command and promise go together in the Scriptures so closely, the believer, as he is now under law to Christ, is bound to promise no more obedience to the law or commandment than the promise secures him grace to enable him to perform.

5th. "If you say it is absurd to bind yourself to impossibilities, it is not so; for we are all bound to impossibilities, because the law binds us to absolute perfection." Answer: Where it is taught in the Word of God that we are bound to impossibilities, I have yet to learn. I know that there it is required that the Scriptures as the Word of God should be read diligently, and a blessing is pronounced upon them that read them and understand them; and men are enjoined to search them that they may find Christ in them. But I scarcely think that a blame is attached there to those who do not read them, because they want their eyesight; or to those who never had an opportunity of obtaining an education sufficient to qualify them for it, or have a natural incapacity to learn to read the Word of God for their instruction and direction. To attend on pub-

lic ordinances is made there also a positive duty of all who have an opportunity or ability to give their attendance upon them. But those who have them not, or those who are confined to beds of sickness so as they are not able to attend upon them, it cannot be their sin that they do not give their attendance upon them; because, in the first case, they want the opportunity which is necessary to make it a duty; in the other case they want the ability, and the Lord will have mercy and not sacrifice. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is a duty obligatory on all gospel hearers; and such as are unregenerated among them, I know, until they are made partakers of the grace of regeneration, cannot and will not believe. But it is only as the thing is possible for them, that their not believing becomes their sin; for though they are utterly unable for it in themselves they are able for it in Christ, whose gift faith is: And accordingly, while unbelief is a sin in those who are favored with the gospel, it cannot be the sin of the heathen, who are without the word of God, which is the ground of faith. They are not bound to believe the gospel in their state of heathen darkness, as a thing impossible. But no sooner does it become possible for them, by the enjoyment of the gospel, with the promise in it of grace, to be made sufficient for them, in this way, than the command of God to believe reaches them, and leaves them guilty of disobedience if they live in unbelief.

In short, I do not find any where in the word of God the least hint given, or any thing that would appear to show, that men are bound to impossibilities, or are called to engage to perform impossibilities. The whole tenor of the word of God plainly speaks another language to men.

6th. Some seem to suppose that the obedience engaged unto in the duty of public religious covenanting, has not a respect so much to the particular personal obedience of the covenanter himself, as to the perfect personal obedience of Christ; and in this way they endeavor to get over the difficulty which appears to lie against men engaging to what they never, in their own persons, can perform in this world. To show how the covenanter may engage to perfect obedience, though he cannot give it, the writer, in the article in the Monitor referred to, says, "Now these requirements of the divine law lead the true covenanter out of himself wholly to Christ, as his only and great law-fulfiller. It is the perfect obedience and strength of Christ that the covnanter has a respect to in accepting him in this service, &c. Thus it is manifest that the covenanter engages to perfect obedience, which he truly possesses, not indeed in himself, but in Christ his head and surety." But it is to be remembered, that our engagements, we come under in public religious covenanting, have a respect to our own personal obedience, and not at all to the obedience given by Christ, any further than that we expect we shall be accepted in the duties we engage to, as duties to be performed by ourselves through this, and derive strength for the performance of them, through this doing of Christ as well as his dying, as the procuring means by which it is to be obtained. And this the whole tenor of our religious bonds makes evident, wherein we engage that we shall do so and so, and not that Christ shall do so for us. What respects Christ as a law fulfiller has a relation to what he has already done for us, as a part of that justifying righteousness which is the ground of both the acceptance of our persons and our services, including the duties we engage to in covenanting, with other services we are to render to God. And this that he has done for us we profess to take up with by faith, but are not to consider it as any part of that which we shall do in Christ, and are to engage to in this duty of covenanting.

7th. It is said "We know that perfect obedience to God's law will never be given by believers, in this world, though they are to engage to this in their vows to God. But when they come to heaven they will

give it. All those covenanters that are at God's right hand are fully paying their vows." Answer: Our vows, we come under in public religious covenanting, have only a respect to duties which belong to us in this life. Like other ordinances covenanting, is designed to help us forward to heaven, but has no respect to what we will be employed in there. This will appear from the uniform language of the covenant deeds of the church; which run generally after this manner, "That we will in our several places and callings, &c." The places and callings we are in here respectively, as ministers and people, public officers and private members in the church, husbands and wives, parents and children, &c. will be done away in heaven.

Having shown the doctrine of our standards, and the judgment of approved writers of the Secession church on the subject, and stated too some reasons of my own why I cannot approve of the sentiment, and also endeavored to answer some objections, I will now conclude these remarks with an extract taken from Allan's Sermons on the subject of covenanting, which appears to me to be exceedingly appropriate to the business in hand, showing that there is no reason for discouragement to those who would honor the Lord in this duty; as, being called to engage in it, they are not called to engage in a duty which they are unable to perform; but to one they are fully able for, as there is grace in the promise to fit them for the performance of it answerable to their need. "Well but, say some, the work is great and we ourselves are but weak and insufficient for the performance of it. Owing to our own weakness and corruption we are ready to mismanage every work in which we engage; how then can we think of putting hand to such an arduous work as this? It is no wonder the consideration of these things should fill us with discouragement; it is even sometimes like to deter us from engaging in the work altogether. But why all these unbelieving fears while there is a sufficiency of grace in the promise to enable the very weakest child in all God's family to discharge this duty with acceptance? He sends none a warfare on their own charges, but hath graciously promised that 'as their days are so their strength shall be.' Had they nothing to depend upon but their own stock, either for the making of their vows or for the payment of them they might well despair. But their mercy is that he calls to no piece of service without accompanying the call with the promise of all needful grace, to enable to the acceptable performance of it. This is particularly the case with respect to the work of which we now treat. He who hath said 'Vow and pay to the Lord your God,' hath also said 'They shall vow a vow to the Lord, and they shall perform it.'" (See Sermon 9th.)

Y.

ART. II. *Of Oaths.*

MR. EDITOR—

I send you, for insertion in the Religious Monitor, the following extract, on the subject of Oaths, from "Wayland's Elements of Moral Science."* The subject is one of much general and practical importance. Without that confidence which an oath is frequently necessary to inspire society could not exist. And few persons pass through the ordinary

* The writer of these remarks embraces this opportunity to invite the attention of the friends of morality and good order, to President Wayland's Elements of Moral Science; in the publication of which the author has performed an important service to the cause of moral truth. This book is designed as a class or text book, on the subject of moral science; and as such it is hoped it will soon be introduced into all our public schools.

course of human life, without being called upon some time or other to take an oath. That part of the extract to which the attention of the readers of the Religious Monitor is particularly requested, is that which states the principles upon which oaths are to be interpreted. These are evidently the only true principles upon which an oath must be interpreted, in order to gain the end for which the ordinance of the oath was instituted, viz: the termination of strife. (Heb. vi. 16.) But I will not detain the reader from the extract itself.

"Theory of oaths; lawfulness of oaths; manner of interpretation of oaths.

I. The theory of oaths.

It is frequently of the highest importance to society, that the facts relating to a particular transaction should be distinctly and accurately ascertained. Unless this could be done, neither the innocent could be protected, nor the guilty punished; that is, justice could not be administered, and society could not exist.

To almost every fact, or to the circumstances which determine it to be fact, there must be from the laws of cause and effect, and from the social nature of man, many witnesses. The fact can, therefore, be generally known, if the witnesses can be induced to testify, and to testify the truth.

To place men under such circumstances, that, upon the ordinary principles of the human mind, they shall be most likely to testify truly, is the design of administering an oath.

In taking an oath, besides incurring the ordinary civil penalties incident to perjury, he who swears calls upon God to witness the truth of his assertions; and, also, either expressly, or by implication, invokes upon himself the judgments of God, if he speak falsely. The ordinary form of swearing, in this country, and in Great Britain, is to close the promise of veracity, with the words, "So help me God;" that is, may God only help me as I tell the truth. Inasmuch as without the help of God we must be miserable for time and for eternity; to relinquish this help if we violate the truth, is, on this condition, to imprecate upon ourselves the absence of the favor of God, and of course, all possible misery forever.

The theory of Oaths, then, I suppose to be as follows:

1. Men naturally speak the truth, when there is no counteracting motive to prevent it; and unless some such motive be supposed to supervene, expect the truth to be spoken.

2. When, however, by speaking falsely some immediate advantage can be gained, or some immediate evil avoided, they will frequently speak falsely.

3. But, when a greater good can be gained, or a greater evil avoided, by speaking the truth, than could possibly be gained or avoided by speaking falsely, they will, on the ordinary principles of the human mind, speak the truth. To place them under such circumstances, is the design of an oath.

4. Now, as the favor of God is the source of every blessing which man can possibly enjoy, and as his displeasure must involve misery utterly beyond the grasp of our limited conceptions; if we can place men under such circumstances, that, by speaking falsely they relinquish all claim to the one, and incur all that is awful in the other, we manifestly place a stronger motive before them for speaking the truth than can possibly be conceived for speaking falsehood. Hence, it is supposed, on the ordinary principles of the human mind, that men, under such circumstances, will speak the truth.

Such, I suppose to be the theory of oaths. There can be no doubt, that if men acted upon this conviction, the truth would be, by means of them, universally elicited.

But inasmuch as men may be required to testify, whose practical conviction of these great moral truths, is at best but weak, and who are liable to be more strongly influenced by immediate, than by ulterior motives, human punishments have always been affixed to the crime of perjury. These, of course, vary with different ages, and in different periods of society. The most equitable provision seems to be that of the Jewish law, by which the perjurer was made to suffer precisely the same injury which he had designed to inflict on the innocent party. The Mosaic enactment seems intended to have been, in regard to this crime, unusually rigorous. The judges are especially commanded not to spare, but to exact an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. It certainly deserves serious consideration, whether modern legislators might not derive important instruction from this feature of Jewish Jurisprudence."

I propose for the present to pass over the second division of this chapter, which treats of the *lawfulness* of oaths; as I trust this will be readily admitted by most, if not all, the readers of the Monitor. President Wayland's concluding remark on this part of the subject, ought, however, to be more seriously considered than what it generally is. "One thing," says he, "however seems evident, that the multiplication of oaths, demanded by the present practice of most christian nations, is not only very wicked, but that its direct tendency is to diminish our reverence for the Deity; and thus, in the end, lead to the very evil which it is intended to prevent."

"III. The interpretation of oaths.

As oaths are imposed for the safety of the party administering them, they are to be interpreted as he understands them. The person under oath has no right to make any mental reservation, but to declare the truth, precisely in the manner that the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth is expected of him. On no other principle would we ever know what to believe or to expect from a witness. If for the sake of personal friendship, or from personal advantage, or from fear of personal inconvenience, or from the excitement of party partiality, he shrink from declaring the whole truth, he is as truly guilty of perjury as though he swore falsely for money."

To this III. section, and particularly the concluding sentence, I would again invite the most solemn attention of the reader—where this conclusion is clear, that it is actual perjury to conceal or keep back, on oath, any fact, or any part of the truth, relative to the matter about which the person is called to testify, or to evade a direct answer to any question which the party on whose account the oath is administered, has a moral right to propose, and that is any and every question which will tend to elicit the whole truth on the matter at issue. And the person who does so, according to the nature of an oath as explained above, is chargeable with making a formal and voluntary abjuration of the favor of God forever; for the sake of whatever present consideration may have induced him to commit the act of perjury.

J. P. M.

ART. III. *The Origin and Import of the Word HEBREW.*

As names are commonly given in modern times, it would be an unprofitable labor to attempt to trace their history or signification; it would add nothing to our knowledge in any respect, as they are for the most part mere arbitrary signs, to distinguish one person or thing from another. This is not however the first or most natural use of a name, but to

give a brief description of the person, or to mark some prominent feature of his character or history. Hence it is from the names of primitive times that we obtain the most satisfactory hints of their history, where the narrative is silent. Of all names recorded in scripture as belonging to men, there is perhaps none that has more weight laid on it than the name *Hebrew*, both in the Old and New Testament. Its origin and import have been largely discussed by many learned writers, but so far as we know, with little agreement or satisfaction; it is observed that the word is derived from *Habar*—*He passed over*, and that Abraham is the first who is called a Hebrew; therefore it is concluded, that he was so called, because he passed over, or came from beyond the river Euphrates. Others think it is taken from *Heber*, one of the ancestors of Abraham, who, on account of some eminence, had his name transmitted in this manner to posterity. Others think that the origin of the name is clearly pointed out, Gen. x. 21, where Shem is called “The father of all the children of *Heber*.”

There is one difficulty in all these schemes, which proves that none of them is the true key to the question, viz: the reasons assigned are equally applicable to many to whom the name is not given. If Abraham was called a *Hebrew* because he came from beyond Euphrates, then all the original inhabitants of Canaan and the adjoining countries ought also to be so called, for they also came over the river, as might be shown; or at any rate Lot and his posterity would be so called, for he was the companion of Abraham in his travels, and unquestionably the name would belong to all the descendants of Abraham alike; to Ishmael as well as to Isaac, to Esau as well as to Jacob; but none of these is by any means the case. A like objection lies against the derivation of the name from *Heber* or Shem to their posterity, because it is given to some only and not to all who have an equal right to it. The truth is, these names are given to these three persons, on three different accounts.

First: Shem is called the father of all the children of Eber or *Heber*. The term *Heber* here we do not take to be the name of any person, but a common noun, which might be rendered *travel*; and the expression “the children of travel,” is a hebraism very common, like these “the children of men,” meaning men; “the children of wickedness,” wicked men; “the children of Beliel,” &c.; so “the children of travel” were travellers, and evidently the same that are spoken of Gen. xi. 2; “they journeyed from the east.” These travellers were not the whole posterity of Noah, as some have supposed, but a colony setting out from the first settlement after the flood far in the east, where Noah and the greater part still remained, as the history of the most eastern nations sufficiently shows. This emigrating company, going to seek and settle some new countries, “found a plain in the land of Shinar,” and there made their first permanent stop. Shem is called the father of these; not that he was the progenitor of them all, (for it is plain that there were many of Japheth’s posterity among them, as also the children of Ham, and it is more than probable Ham himself,) but, in a sense very frequent in scripture, because he was the projector of the journey, or the chief captain of the company, and probably both. So Jabal is called the father of such as dwell in tents and have cattle; and Jubal is called the father of such as handle the harp and organ.—Gen. iv. 20, 21. Joab is called the father of the valley of craftsmen.—1 Chron. iv. 14; verse 21 we read, “the father of Maresha and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen, &c.”

Second: The son of Salah was born sixty-seven years after the flood, probably about the time that the emigration before spoken of took place, and was called *Heber* (travel, or a traveller,) in commemoration of that event; as his son was afterward called *Peleg*, (division) to commemo-

rate the dispersion of men from Babel; “because in his days the earth was divided.”

Third: Abraham and the nation of Israel were called Hebrews, (travellers) not only because he had left his country and kindred and travelled toward the land of Canaan, but because of his principle in doing so; it had a spiritual meaning in this case, it had its chief respect to the faith and religious profession of Abraham, and is well represented by the terms *Pilgrim* or *Sojourner*, one who is not in his own home or country; having no permanent abode, but moving from one station to another, making but short stays at any; still going on to his final destination, as the children of Israel did in the wilderness, and as those spoken of, Ps. lxxxiv. who come up through the valley of Baca, going from strength to strength, from one station of rest and refreshment to another, still prosecuting their journey towards Zion; and accordingly they are called *Hobri*, a word of the same derivation and import. Now this was precisely the profession of Abraham and the other patriarchs: “They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth,” and by this profession they declared plainly that they sought some country; and their practice showed that it was neither their native country which they had left, nor the land of Canaan unto which they had come, but “a better country, even a heavenly.”—Heb. xi. 13—17. Hence we observe the name descends to those of his posterity only who professed the same faith with him; while all those who fell off from it, and conformed to the ungodly world, applying themselves to make worldly establishments, and obtain a part and portion in the present life, immediately lost it, as the posterity of Ishmael, Keturah, Esau, &c. The proper right to the name is bounded by the same lines as the covenants and promises; for it was an interest in these that induced them to enter on the life and profession of pilgrims. The heathen neighbors of Abraham might probably consider nothing farther in the name than as being descriptive of his mode of life, dwelling in tabernacles, &c.; but this was only a remote meaning of it, or rather, his external mode of life was his faith and profession put in practice in a particular way. “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, &c.”—Heb. xi. 9. In after ages it became a patronymic, and the surrounding nations might consider it as nothing more; the nation of Israel always looked on it as their most honorable title; hence Paul, enumerating his external privileges, says he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and if he were disposed to boast, as the false apostles did, he had as much right; “Are they Hebrews? so am I.” But carnal men can have only carnal views of any thing; and so it was with them, though the mass of them had lost the spiritual sense of it, had lost the faith and practice of Abraham, they still assumed his honorable title, and claimed his privileges on a carnal account; therefore this was among the things which the apostle had once considered his gain, but at length counted only loss for Christ. As he teaches concerning another name of the same people, “He is not a Hebrew who is one outwardly, but he is a Hebrew who is one inwardly,—in the spirit and not in the letter.”

According to this distinction we find the name and character highly valued by God and the godly. When God demanded the liberation of his people from Pharaoh’s oppression, he calls himself the Lord God of the Hebrews.—Exod. iii. 18. The people are, through that part of their history, more commonly styled “the children of Israel,” “Israelites,” &c.; but there was a peculiar propriety in their being here called Hebrews, as they were thereby reminded that though they had now been in Egypt some generations, yet it was only as sojourners, and in this one word, their most precious concerns, their interest in the heavenly inheritance, was brought before them. And, lest they should think that their pilgrimage was to be only of an outward kind, and for a short time, to

be entirely ended when they should be settled in Canaan, he gave them an agrarian law, which should forever keep them in mind of it, as the true import of their natural title of Hebrews. Lev. xxv. 23.—“The land shall not be sold forever, for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.” Again, when they had reached the height of their earthly prosperity as a nation, we find David, the greatest of their kings, taking the humble character as his honor and delight. “I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner, as were all my fathers.”—Ps. xxxix. 12. “I am a stranger on the earth.”—exix. 19. “Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.”—exix. 54—&c.

In conclusion, then, we may learn the fulness of the scripture; there is not a single term used without signification; and where any word has any mark of importance put on it, there is a treasure to be searched for. Again, we may learn the propriety of professors of religion being designated by appropriate names; it is one way in which they briefly declare their faith. It is commonly said, names are nothing, but that is only when men have the name without the thing; and then, indeed, they are worse than nothing; as it was with the carnal, formal, and hypocritical Jews, who took to themselves all the names and titles that belonged to precious saints before them, and thereby only deceived themselves and others; and so it is at this day with all empty professors. QUIDAM.

ART. IV. Errors of Dr. Dwight and the Hopkinsian School.

(Concluded from page 243.)

To make the argument still plainer, let it be observed that there are two ways in which an obligation may be discharged; either by paying *the very thing* stipulated for in the engagement, or by paying *some other thing* which may be accepted as an equivalent for that payment. In the first case, when, for example, a person pays the money he owed, or suffers the whole amount of punishment due, he is entitled, *ipso facto*, to a discharge; but, in the other case, where something is paid *different* from what was stipulated for, the payment does not, *of itself*, release the criminal from his obligation; there must be a previous act of consent on the part of the creditor or ruler to accept of this payment, and this act may be justly termed a remission of the debt or crime to the original offender. This latter mode of payment, which may be either accepted or refused, is properly called *a satisfaction*, and may be even opposed to *payment* strictly speaking. We usually speak of Christ having paid our debt; but he did so in the way of satisfaction; he did what was held by law and justice to be equivalent with our paying our own debt. It will be easily seen here, that we do not mean to assert that Christ did not bear in his own person *the same kind of punishment* that was due to justice by his people; it is the comfort of the believer to know that, as he obeyed the same law which we had transgressed, so he suffered under that law the *very punishment* which we had incurred by transgression. What we intend is, that, we being the offenders, owed *our own lives* to justice, and that God, by accepting of the life of another in our stead, mercifully relaxed the claims of his justice, and granted us a gracious remission. It is not so merely because he was paid by *another person*, (for, as in the case of pecuniary payment, this does not make the discharge a gratuitous remission,) but because that person did not, and could not, pay *the very thing* which justice originally demanded, namely, the life of the sinner; though he paid a full equivalent for this, which justice was pleased to ac-

cept in our behalf. Thus, justice was satisfied, the debt was paid, and yet the person of the debtor was mercifully spared, and his debt graciously remitted.

If it should still be alleged that such a translation of our debt to Christ leaves no room for the *actual remission* of our sins on conversion, we reply that the same reasoning we had used above applies to the sinner even after the atonement has been made. The debt of our guilt was transferred to Christ, but not in the same manner in which it was due by us; for we owed personal punishment, which could not be transferred to another. Still, therefore, we are personally criminal, and worthy of death; so that, if forgiven, we have to thank the grace and mercy of God for having accepted of a satisfaction in our stead, and graciously imputing the merit of this satisfaction to us. The personal guilt of the sinner still remains to be graciously forgiven, though it is forgiven on the ground of the satisfaction of Christ. After he is forgiven, the sinner, though still worthy of death, is no longer obnoxious to it: The law can still charge him; but these charges are answered by the righteousness imputed to him.

Though it is impossible to find a case among men corresponding in all respects with that of our redemption by Christ, we may refer, as an illustration of what we have advanced, to that of Paul and Onesimus. Onesimus had offended his master Philemon, and seems also to have contracted a pecuniary debt to him. Paul was anxious that his master should be reconciled to him, and to effect this, engages to pay any debt that Onesimus might have incurred. "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it." Here the debt might be considered as paid; and yet, as Onesimus was a criminal as well as a debtor, Paul beseeches Philemon to forgive him. The payment of the debt was not inconsistent with the free forgiveness of the criminal. Philemon might still have refused to forgive the offence done to him by his servant. But we shall suppose that he accepted of Paul's satisfaction; in this case, we may suppose him to have thus addressed his returning servant: "I might have punished you for your evil deserts, but, for the sake of what Paul has done, who has satisfied me, I now freely receive you into my favor again, and forgive the wrong you have done me." So Christ took upon him the debt of his people, in order, that, being transferred to him, it might be remitted to them, and so "God for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us."

Thus the conclusion to which we come by attending to the same distinction, is quite the reverse of that drawn from it by Dr. Dwight and his followers. We maintain that there is not the slightest discrepancy or opposition between the grace of God, and the meritorious satisfaction of Christ, even viewing that satisfaction as the payment of the criminal debt of sinners. In the Scripture the grace of God is opposed to all merit on the part of *the sinner himself*, but never to that of *his surety*. So far from this, the grace of God and the purchase of the Saviour are uniformly combined, and each represented as enhancing the glory of the other. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Being justified *freely by his grace through the redemption* that is in Christ Jesus." Besides what has been already advanced to shew the compatibility of these two things—full purchase and free pardon—let it be observed, 1st, that the grace of God was the *originating cause* of the whole work of redemption. The Scripture traces the whole to "the good pleasure of his will," to "his great love wherewith he loved us." Let none suppose, from what we have said, that we hold that Christ purchased for us the grace, the love, or the mercy of God. No; this was beyond all purchase, and would have been "no more grace," had it been purchased. What he purchased for us was the fruits, the effects, the blessings of that

grace. But the grace or love of God itself, so far from being purchased, was that which provided the purchase. In so far, therefore, as respected the love of God, all that the purchase of Christ effected was to open up a way in which it might be honorably and consistently exercised towards guilty man. In estimating the gratuitous nature of the gospel salvation, we must ascend to the original cause, which pervades and gives its character to the whole. The redemption of Christ was only one of the means devised in infinite wisdom, whereby the grace of God might be manifested in the pardon of guilty man. It was subordinate to his grace; and according to the old maxim, *subordinata non pugnant*, "things subordinate are not inconsistent with each other," there was a perfect harmony between them. 2dly. Consider that God the Father himself was at the expense of providing the satisfaction. It was not as if he had received this satisfaction from another being: "God purchased the church with his own blood." The union betwixt the Father and the Son renders the transaction between them altogether peculiar and extraordinary. There was no extrinsic influence employed to bear upon the Divine mind: "the covenant of peace was between them both." Each, however, may be viewed as bearing their own share in the expense of the work; for while it devolved on the Son to pay the price immediately into the hands of Divine Justice, it became the Father to "make him perfect through suffering." "God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." "God loved us, and gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Here the creditor not only freely forgives the debt, but comes forward in the most generous manner, and pays the debt out of his own exchequer. And yet some of the debtors, thus forgiven, have the assurance to step forward, and ask, "If Christ has paid the debt for sinners—how can they be said to be pardoned or delivered by grace?" 3dly. Let it be noticed, that though pardon was an act of *justice to the Surety*, it is an act of free *grace to the sinner*. Dr. Dwight and his friends are constantly putting such questions as these, "If an equivalent is paid for our redemption, may we not, on the ground of justice, *demand* salvation? Is not God then *bound in justice* to forgive the sinner? And where then is the room for pardon?" These questions proceed on the supposition, already shewn to be groundless, that we hold the pecuniary view of the satisfaction of Christ, which they are pleased to ascribe to us; but, according to the principles laid down, we may hold, with perfect consistency, that in bestowing pardon, God performs an act of justice to his Son, while he confers upon us a boon of absolute and unmerited grace. Besides, the terms of the questions are invidiously and erroneously stated. No believer in Christ, we will venture to say, ever imagined that God was bound in justice to him, to forgive his sins; or thought of *demanding* salvation as something *due to him*. He feels that he is only worthy of death, and this keeps him humble even when assured of salvation. But can it be denied that God has *bound himself*, has pledged his justice for the salvation of the sinner? Is it not said, that "if we confess our sins, he is *faithful and just* to forgive us our sins?" and "that he hath set forth his Son a propitiation through faith in his blood for the forgiveness of sins, *that he might be just*, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus?" And to whom is he faithful and just, but to himself and to his own Son, to whose meritorious sacrifice he has respect in justifying the ungodly? Pardon, then, is an act of justice, as well as of mercy; these two have "met together and kissed each other," in the blessed work of our reconciliation. It does not follow from this, however, that God is bound in justice to confer salvation on all men; this absurdity belongs exclusively to the doctrine of universal redemption. It is only in regard to the elect, considered as in Christ their federal head, that justice has thus become pledged; and the duty of faith is to realize and rejoice in this pledge as

given in his word. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?"

Dr. Dwight asserts, indeed, the necessity of an atonement, but then this atonement consisted in nothing more than in Christ having "rendered to the law, character, and government of God, such peculiar honor as to make it consistent with their unchangeable nature and glory, that sinners should, on the proper conditions, be forgiven." (Sermon 64.) That is, as he expresses it elsewhere, "Christ *accomplished something, without which man would not have been redeemed* from the bondage of death and sin." (Sermon 38.) It is plain, that, according to this doctrine, Christ can in no proper sense of the term be called *our Redeemer*; he merely did something without which we could not be redeemed. The Holy Spirit may, with as much propriety, be called our Redeemer; for it is certain that he "accomplishes something, without which man would not have been redeemed." Nay, even the minister who brings the tidings of salvation is equally entitled on this ground to the designation. Thus this blessed name loses its signification: our tongue must falter when we utter it, lest the very sound should beguile us. The Doctor tells us that "we are not, *in the literal sense*, purchased at all." But if no price whatever was paid for our redemption, if the blood of Christ was not a true and proper equivalent to procure our deliverance from the bondage of death and sin,—we cannot be said to have been purchased by him, *in any sense* of that term. We allow that the term is metaphorical, but the metaphor surely points to a real transaction; unless, indeed, the Doctor means to say that Christ only redeems us metaphorically, and that we are saved from death, as Isaac was, "in a figure." We wish to know, then, what was the nature of this transaction? It will not do to say merely, that Christ made it consistent with the honor of justice that sinners should be forgiven. We admit this, but desire to know *what he did*, in order to render this consistent with the honor of justice? The Doctor answers, "he accomplished something." And we ask, in return, what could this "something" be, but a plenary satisfaction to divine justice? If, as he elsewhere admits, it would have been inconsistent with justice to have forgiven the sinner without an atonement, it is impossible to conceive how it could become consistent with justice, except the atonement had made satisfaction to that attribute; for, what made it inconsistent with justice to forgive the sinner, but just this, that justice *demanded* the death of the sinner? To forgive sin, therefore, in consistency with justice, must necessarily imply that this *demand* has been answered, or, in some way or other, *satisfied*.

To avoid this conclusion, which seems inevitable, the Doctor and his party have recourse to a distinction between *distributive justice*, and what they call *public or benevolent justice*; understanding by the former that justice which distributes good or evil to men according to their deserts, and by the other some other kind of justice of their own contrivance, which consults the general good of the universe. To satisfy the claims of this latter kind of justice, they suppose Christ to have suffered and died. Without entering, at present, into the examination of such a distinction, which has no foundation in Scripture, it is sufficient to observe, that if Christ suffered under the hand of justice at all, he must have satisfied its claims upon all those for whom he suffered; that justice must always act according to law; and that, as there is but one law, by which the sinner is condemned, and by which he shall be judged, so it must have been to answer the claims of that law that this surety died.

That Christ, by the all-perfect obedience and satisfaction which he rendered to the precepts of the law and the demands of justice, paid down a true and proper price or ransom for the deliverance of his people from the bondage of sin and death; in other words, that he did that which

procured them a right and title to the enjoyment of pardon and eternal life, is a truth so clearly stated in the gospel, and lies so close to the foundation of the Christian's hope, that it is matter of astonishment that any professing to believe that gospel, and to cherish that hope, should have thought of denying it. What is it that constitutes the ground of the Christian's title to pardon and eternal happiness? Is it the grace of God? Certainly not. It is nothing else than the surety righteousness of his blessed saviour. The grace of God has provided that righteousness for him, has revealed it, has brought it nigh, applies it, and will reign, through the application of it, unto eternal life. But it is the merit of the Redeemer's righteousness that *entitles* him to life. There is no other way in which the merit of another can entitle us to a blessing, except in the way of its being imputed to us, or accounted as ours in law; and if, when imputed, it conveys a title to life, the death of Christ, by which it was wrought out, must have possessed a meritorious value to procure, and, let us say it now without hesitation, to *purchase* that and all other blessings for his people. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." "Ye are bought with a price."

We cannot conclude without again warning our readers, especially any young aspirants to the ministry who may peruse these pages, from being led astray by the plausible reasonings of this school. They will find, we trust, on serious and candid consideration, that they proceed from an ill-judged attempt to bring the ways and thoughts of God into a closer correspondence with the ways and thoughts of man. Aiming to exalt one attribute of the Deity at the expense of all the rest, they, in reality, obscure the glory of the grace of God.

The quotation we have made from Dwight is sufficient to show where the system would lead us. It makes no provision for the return of the sinner, and leaves the Saviour himself without any security of seeing the travail of his soul. It suspends both the grace of God and the justification of the sinner, on certain conditions to be performed, and certain dispositions to be cherished by us; and leaves us, after all, with nothing but a bare *hope* that we may be forgiven, if these conditions are properly fulfilled. At the same time, it shuts in our face the great "door of hope" opened in the revaluation of "the redemption purchased by Christ," leaving us no other ground to build upon but the mere grace and good pleasure of God. And it involves the gross and degrading conclusion, that God is condemning sinners every day to everlasting perdition, though something had been done which rendered it quite consistent with his justice to have forgiven them!

We may mention also, that we were sorry to find Andrew Fuller, in his excellent little work, entitled, "the Gospel its own Witness," compromising the doctrine of Christ's purchase, and puzzling his brains to very little purpose with the distinction between debtor and criminal. The example is useful to teach us, that, before we adopt, or at least publish, views inconsistent with the obvious tenor of Scripture, and which require us to explain away its most familiar phrases, it would be well to study what has been already written in their vindication. *Titus.*

ART. V. *The Christian World Unmasked.*

(Continued from page 251.)

But, Sir, you call yourself an honest man, and honest men will pay their debts: you own yourself a sinner too, and sins are debts due to

God. How are these debts to be discharged ? They are a most enormous sum ; and when felt, prove an heavy load ; and if not cancelled, must bring eternal ruin. Do you think of this matter, Sir ? It is a weighty business.

Yes, yes, *Doctor*, I have had some thoughts about it, and do not apprehend much danger or much trouble here. I must *repent* ; and *amend* ; and do what I *can* ; and Christ will do the rest. Some debts I shall pay myself, a *decent* part of the shot, and Jesus must discharge the rest of the reckoning. This is our parish way of paying sinful debts, and seems a very good way. We desire no better, and only wish to pay our neighbour's debts as easily. What think you of it Doctor ? sure you can have no objection here.

Indeed, *Sir*, this way of paying sinful debts, as easy as it seems to you, would ruin me effectually. *The wages of sin is death* ; and if I must pay off only one sin, I am ruined ; for that debt is death. So of course I die, and perish. No help is found for me in this way. Either I must be forgiven wholly, or wholly be undone.

This method of payment would make you a bankrupt presently, and ruin you eternally. Pray, examine it a little closer. First, you talk of *repenting*. True ; repentance goes before forgiveness.* But you speak as if repentance was your own work ; whereas the Bible says, it is the *gift of God* : Acts xi. 18. 2 Tim. ii. 25. and Jesus is exalted up on high, *to give it*. Acts v. 31. You had better pray for repentance, than try to squeeze it from a millstone ; and such is every heart by nature. No kind relenting is found there, till Jesus sends it. What your own hands bestow can avail nothing, but will need to be repented of. And where God gives repentance, it is never meant to purchase pardon. For tears pay no debts. They will not pay your neighbor's : and much less God's, which are weighty debts indeed.

Repentance is designed to make the heart loathe sin, through a sense of its deep pollution ; and dread sin, through a feeling of its guilty burden. Thus the heart becomes acquainted with its nakedness and ruin, is broke down and humbled, and forced to fly to Jesus Christ, and seek deliverance by grace *alone*. Nor is the business quickly done. When the heart is conscious of its misery, it will try a thousand legal tricks to shake its pitched shirt off ; but wearied out at length with endless disappointment, it falls at Jesus' feet, and meekly takes up Peter's prayer, *Lord, save, or I perish.*

After repenting, you talk of *amending*. Ay, to be sure : no repentance can be true without amendment. But you seem to think your heart only wants amending, and may be mended just as easy as your coat. Truly, Sir, it wants new making ; and no real mending can be found without new making. All the rest is varnish ; which may please yourself, and satisfy a neighbor, but will not pass with God. A blackmoor painted white, is but a blackmoor still ; and gives the image of a decent modern Christian. Your conduct may be much reformed ; but your heart, unless created new, will be full of earthliness and uncleanness, and remain the devil's forge and workshop still. No thorough change is made, until the work begins above, and God creates the heart anew. When repentance is bestowed, David's prayer will suit you well, *Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.* Nay, do not pout at David ; your heart and eyes are teeming with uncleanness too, and make you stand in woful need of David's prayer.

But supposing God should bless you with a *new heart and right spirit*, and thereby cause you to walk in his statutes, Ezek. xxxvi, 26, 27, still I ask, what becomes of past arrears ? No compensation yet is made for for-

* The existence of the *grace* of *repentance* in the soul precedes *forgiveness*, but the *exercise* of that *grace* follows it.—ED. REL. MON.

mer trespasses. Doing present duty cannot pay off past debts; yet these debts must be discharged, or you are ruined; and you have no overplus to pay a single debt; nay you are running deeper into debt daily, by doing what you ought not, and leaving undone what you ought to do. Still your deserved wages every day and every hour is death. Let me remind you once again of Peter's prayer, *Lord, save, or I perish.*

Lastly, you say, I must do what I *can*, and Christ will do the rest. This is the common cry, the general run; and is thought a safe and easy passage for a Christian. But the passage is too strait and hazardous for me; I dare not venture my own soul upon it. Supposing you have will and power for duty, then I ask, Do you pray as much as you *can*, or read the scripture as much as you *can*, or relieve the poor as much as you *can*, or visit the sick as much as you *can*? Do you deny yourself as much as you *can*; and watch against sin as much as you *can*; or do any one duty as much as you *can*? Indeed you do not, and you know you do not. But if you put salvation on this footing, of doing what you *can*, and have not done it, what sentence can you look for from the Lord, but this? *Out of thy own mouth I will judge thee.* Luke xix. 22.

If this plea, of doing what you *can*, will not abide a trial, no other plea remains but doing what you *will*, or what you *please*, and making Jesus Christ do all the rest. But you dare not urge this plea: it is too shameful and barefaced for any mortal to avow it. Now, Sir, if you are not able to abide the trial, of doing what you *can*; and dare not urge the shameful plea, of doing what you *will*; how is it possible for you to be saved by your doings? Either a full pardon and a free salvation must be granted through Jesus Christ *alone*, or you are *undone* by your *doings*, cast and lost for ever.

Perhaps you think that Christ came to shorten man's duty, and make it more feasible, by shoving a commandment out of Moses' tables, as the papists have done; or by clipping and paring all the commandments, as the moralists do. Thus, *sincere* obedience, instead of *perfect*, is now considered as the law of works.

But, Sir, if Jesus Christ came to shorten man's duty, he came to give us a licence to sin. For duty cannot be shortened without breaking commandments. And thus Christ becomes a minister of sin with a witness, and must be ranked at the head of antinomian preachers.

And what do you mean by *sincere* obedience? It is a pretty expression, and serves many pretty purposes. It sears a conscience notably, and daubs the face of Jesus Christ wonderfully; and has so vague a meaning, it will signify any thing, or nothing, just as you please. It is satan's catch-word for the gospel; and upon his gates might be truly written, *Room for sincere obedience.*

But what is it? If sincere obedience means any thing, it must signify either doing what you *can*, or doing what you *will*. So we are got upon the old swampy ground again, are sinking apace into a quagmire, and shall be strangled presently unless we retire.

Jesus Christ is so far from intending to pare away Moses' tables, that he carries every commandment to its utmost extent. A wanton look is declared to be adultery; and a wrathful heart is deemed murder; and the man, who calls his neighbor a fool, is threatened with hell-fire. This does not look like shortening man's duty, and making it sit more easy on a squeamish stomach. Surely this preaching cries out mainly against sincere obedience; a doctrine sweetly framed to set the heavenly gates wide open for drunkards, whoremongers, and all men.

Jesus says expressly, that *he did not come to destroy the law*, by weakening or shortening Moses' tables; and he assures us, that whoever shall break the *least* commandment, and teach men to do so, shall be *least* in the kingdom of heaven, or farthest from it.

If another witness is needful, we may call in St. James, who is just at hand, and a favorite with the champions for works and sincere obedience. But the good apostle happens to be rather sturdy in this matter, and declares, that if *a man should keep the whole law, except in one point, he is yet guilty of all.* James ii. 10. A failure in a single article ruins him. Whoever breaks the least command, or neglects the least duty, thereby procures to himself as solid a title to eternal misery, as the man who breaks all the commandments every day of his life. Which is designed to shew the absolute impossibility of being justified in any manner by our works.

Why, *Doctor*, you amaze me mightily. I never heard such language in my life before. Our parish Doctor does not treat his patients in this rough manner. Surely you have overshot the mark. What is really just and equitable among men, will be just and equitable with God. And is any thing found among men, that bears a resemblance to this proceeding of God?

Yes, *Sir*, enough is found in every country, and in your own land, to justify God herein. Many crimes are punished with death in Britain, and the punishment is inflicted for a *single* crime. The law does not inquire, whether you have offended *often*, but whether you have offended *once*. It tries you for a *single* offence; and if found guilty, will condemn you without mercy. Now if human laws are not taxed with injustice, though they doom a man to die for a *single* act of treason, murder, robbery, or forgery, why should Cod's law be thought unjust, because it punishes a *single* crime with death?

However, you must not mistake St. James' meaning. He does affirm, that a single breach of God's law deserves eternal death, as well as ten thousand; yet he does not say, that small and great offenders will have equal punishment. No: mighty sinners will be mightily tormented. Men's future torment will be suited to the number and the greatness of their crimes. Yet moderate offenders can have small consolation from hence, because the shortest punishment is eternal, and the coldest place in hell will prove a hot one.

Sir, by your countenance, I perceive you are not yet disposed to renounce sincere obedience. And though unable to maintain your ground, you are not willing to give up your arms, and ask our noble *Captain* quarter, to save your life. Let the matter take a little more sifting. You seemed to complain of God, for making death the wages of a single sin; but you might have reason to complain, if God had made sincere obedience a *condition* of salvation, because no man understands what it means. Much talked of it is, like the good man in the moon, yet none could ever ken it. I dare defy the scribes and all the lawyers in the world, to tell me truly what sincere obedience is. Whether it means the doing half my duty, or three quarters, or one quarter, or one fiftieth, or one hundredth part. Where must we draw the line of sincere obedience? It surely needs a magic wand to draw it. And can we think that God would leave a matter of such moment at such dreadful hazard? Whatever is made a *condition* in a human or divine covenant, be that condition less or more, sincere or perfect obedience, it must be executed punctually, from first to last, or the covenant is forfeited. On this account, *conditions* in a covenant always are, and must be marked out precisely. Yet here, sincere obedience is called a *condition*, and no one knows what it is; nor will allow this poor unmeaning thing, whatever it is, to be absolutely binding. It is a condition and no condition: just as much grace as you choose, and as many or as few good works as you please. O fine condition! Surely Satan was the author of it.

When human law-givers judge a crime deserveth death, and make it capital, they always draw the line of death, and mark the crime exactly, that all

may know what it is, and when they do commit it. And if God hath made sincere obedience the *condition* of salvation, he would certainly have drawn the line, and marked out the boundary precisely, because our life depended on it.

If some Utopian prince should frame a body of laws, and declare that every one, who did not keep the laws *sincerely*, as well as ever he could, should die, this pleasant sanction would make a dull Boetian grin; and when the judges took a circuit in this fairy land, each assize would prove a maiden one, no doubt. Now if such a constitution would be hooted at among men, as the utmost foolishness of folly, can we think the wise God would adopt such a system?

Sincere obedience is called the condition of salvation; but God has drawn no line to mark the boundary; therefore every man must draw the line for himself. Now, Sir, observe the consequence: mark how this ravelled clew winds up, and shews its filthy bottom. One prays on Sundays, but at no other time: that is his line of devotion. Another only prays in a tempest: that is his line. And a third will only pray when he is sick or dying.—One is mellow once a week, and staggers home, but keeps upon his legs: that is his line of sobriety. Another gets much tipsy every night, but drinks no spirituous liquors: that is his line. And a third will take a dram stoutly, but declares *sincerely* that he *cannot* help it: he should be dead without it. One does not break the bond of wedlock, but casts a wanton look upon his maid: that is his line of chastity. Another has no wife, but keeps a whore; that is his line. And a third has both a wife and a whore. What must we say to these things? They are all condemned: but if God has drawn no boundary, man must draw it, and will draw it, where he pleaseth. Sincere obedience thus becomes a nose of wax; and is so fingered, as to fit exactly every human face. I look upon this doctrine as the devil's master-piece, the most ingenious trap that ever was contrived by him. Where other woful doctrines slay a thousand, this will slay ten thousand. Talking of sincere obedience, and of doing what we can, is mighty plausible: it sounds well, and looks decent; but opens a dreadful sluice for the profligate, and erects a noble pillar for the deist.

I cannot think that the growth of deism is chiefly owing to the growth of immorality. A person will not surely choose to be a deist, because he grows more wicked: he will not merely reject Jesus Christ, because he stands in more need of him. But a man becomes a deist, by hearing of sincere obedience, and believing there is merit in it. Now the price of merit is not fixed in a protestant market: it is much talked of, but not rated. He therefore sets what price he pleaseth on his own merit; and pays his heavy debts off, as a neighboring state one did, by raising the currency of his coin. Thus, though he may have been enormously wicked, yet by the fancied merit of a few good works in life, or by a charitable sum bequeathed at his death, he goes in a fiery chariot up to heaven, unless he chance to be kidnapped in the way by satan.

If works are a *condition* in the gospel-covenant, then works must make the *whole* of it. Sincere obedience, as a condition, will lead you unavoidably up to *perfect* obedience. No intermediate point can be assigned, where you may stop. All the commands of God are inforced by the same authority. He that saith, *Commit no adultery*, saith also, *Do not kill*. And if you allow *one* duty to be absolutely binding, you must allow *all* the rest. For they all stand upon the same footing.

But perhaps you think, though all the commands of God are binding, they bind only to a *certain degree*: and hence the gospel-covenant is called a covenant of grace. Then I ask, Sir, what is *that degree*? How far *must* we go, and where *may* we stop? You cannot mark the limit, and God does assign none. Yet if this had been the tenor of the gospel-

covenant, he would have marked *that degree* precisely, because my life depended upon knowing it.

What saith your Bible ? How readest thou ? Does it allow you to be guilty of adultery or murder, or blasphemy, or perjury, or theft to a *certain degree* ? Indeed it does not. Or may you indulge a *measure* of anger, or envy, or malice, or lying ? Indeed you may not. My testament says, *put away from you all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, with all malice.* Ephes. iv. 31. And it commands you not only to abstain from all evil, but from all *appearance* of it. 1 Thess. v. 22.

Thus you can neither exclude *any kind* of duty, nor *any degree* of each kind. But the moment you seek to be justified in any measure by obedience, that moment you *fall from grace*, and become *a debtor to do the whole law*.

God has proposed no more than two covenants. The first was *wholly* of works, which says, *do and live* ; and gives the man a title unto life, *who shall keep the law perfectly*. The second covenant is *wholly* of grace, which says, *believe and be saved*. In this covenant, salvation is *fully purchased* by Jesus Christ, and *freely applied* to the sinner by his Spirit. Grace lays the foundation, and grace brings forth the top stone with shouting. Glory be to God for this grace.

Now the first covenant is allowed on all hands to be *too hard* ; and the second is thought by most to be *too easy*, and would fall to pieces, unless shoared up by sincere obedience. Accordingly, by the help of this rotten buttress, men have patched up a third covenant, consisting *partly* of works and *partly* of grace. In which the sinner owns himself indebted something, he knows not what, to Jesus Christ ; and takes the rest, be what it will, to himself. The captain and the soldier make a joint purse, and purchase a crown between them. The soldier wins some gold to make the crown, and Jesus studs it round with diamonds. O rare soldier ! He must not ascribe *salvation unto God and the Lamb*, as the saints do, (Rev. vii. 9, 10.) but to the *Lamb* and the *soldier*.

This mixed covenant is the darling of nature. It both cherisheth our vanity, and opens a door for licentiousness. The judaizing Christians, mentioned in the Acts, were the first who began to adulterate the gospel, by blending the covenants, and seeking to be justified by faith and works conjointly. They did not consider the precepts of the gospel, as a *rule* of life, but as a *bond* of the covenant. And they were led into this error, partly by a *constitutional pride* which is common to all ; and partly by a *national prejudice* which was peculiar to themselves. Moses had been their law-giver, and works were the letter of his covenant. Of course they would be tenacious of a law of works, and as unwilling to give up their old law-giver, as an husband is to part with the wife of his youth. Moses had reigned long over them, and they gloried in being his disciples ; but Jesus now would be their king. And like a besieged people, who are driven to the last extremity, if they cannot keep the conqueror out, they will make the best terms they can for themselves and their prince. If Moses must not reign alone, he shall be seated near the conqueror, and they will swear fealty to both.

Wherever these judaizing Christians came, and found men disposed, as they are naturally, for the mixed covenant, they always preached circumcision to them, saying *Except ye be circumcised, ye cannot be saved.* Acts xv. 1. And they preached right, if the gospel be a mixed covenant of faith and works. For in such a covenant, there is just the same reason for circumcision as for baptism. If you desire benefit from the covenant of grace, you must be baptised : and if you seek advantage from the covenant of works, you must be circumcised. A rite of initiation is appointed unto both the covenants ; and you cannot enter into both without partaking of the double rite.

Are you free of the mercer's company, and desirous to be incorporated among the sadler's? You must undergo a second initiation. The former rites have made you a free mercer, but cannot make you a free sadler. So, if you join mount Sinai to mount Sion, and would partake of benefit from both the covenants, you must undergo a double initiation, because the rites are different. Baptism will no more admit you into Moses' temple than circumcision can receive you into the church of Christ.

Allowing therefore that the gospel covenant is a mixed one, of works and grace, the judaizing Christians did not preach amiss, when they said, *Except ye be circumcised, ye cannot be saved.* You expect, say they, a share of your salvation from the covenant of works; but no profit can you have from that covenant, till you have fairly entered it by circumcision.

And does it not seem equitable, in this mixed covenant, that the Sabbath should be equally divided between the Jewish service and the gospel worship? You are half a Jew in heart, Sir, though not in profession; and having abundantly more cause to sacrifice a bullock to Jehovah, than the wise man of Athens had to kill a cock for Esculapius, and thus at his death infatuate the doctrine of his life.

However, Sir, at all events you must be circumcised, if your mixed covenant be a true one. And you have only this alternative, either to reject the covenant, or to admit of circumcision. And since you seem unwilling to give up your works, I must send a Jewish rabbi, or some Hebrew professor to your house, with a pruning knife.

No, *Doctor*, hold there; more words than one to this bargain.—I desire to hear no more of circumcision; and the thought of your pruning knife so bewilders me, that I have dropt all the ends of your discourse about sincere obedience. Could you pick the threads up again, and wrap them in a little compass?

I will try to oblige you, *Sir*. And first, sincere obedience is no where mentioned in the gospel as a *condition* of salvation. But if it were a condition, sure it would have been *expressly* mentioned, because of its high importance. Yet the Bible is not only silent in this matter, but asserts the contrary. St. Paul declares roundly, *We are saved by grace through faith: not of works, lest any man should boast.* Ephes. ii. 8, 9. The reason added, *Lest any man should boast*, plainly shuts out all works of sincere obedience, as a *condition*. For though these works are often small enough, yet if the condition is fulfilled by them, such is human vanity, they would afford a ground for boasting. Therefore, to dig the whole cankered root of merit up, and give all the glory of salvation unto God and the Lamb, the apostle says absolutely, *It is of grace; not of works.* Works have no share in the covenant of grace as a *condition* of life; they are only the *fruit* of salvation freely bestowed, and the *genuine evidence* of a true faith, which *works by love*.

Again, if because obedience is inculcated in the covenant of grace it is thought to be required as a *condition* of salvation; and though not mentioned expressly, is certainly intended. Then I ask, what is the condition? It is highly needful for me to know it, and to know it perfectly, because my life depends upon it. I suppose sincere obedience must mean something *short* of perfect. Pray, Sir, how *much short*? Half an inch, or half a mile? Where must I draw my line, and fix my staff? The Bible has not told me, and you cannot tell me, nor all the scribes in Christendom. So, I am brought to a fine pass! Here my life depends on a condition, which must be performed, and I know nothing of it, nor can know, and yet am ruined if I take a step too short. Oh, Sir, if sincere obedience had been a condition of salvation, God would certainly have shewn me how much short it comes of perfect; and have marked out the line exactly, whither I must go, and where I might stop.

Further, you describe sincere obedience, by doing what you *can*; and thus explain one loose expression by another full as loose. I call the expression *loose*, not merely for its loose meaning, but for its loose tendency. And here we may behold the subtlety of satan, who blinds our eyes with such expressions, as bear a *decent* countenance, and *seem* to have a meaning, yet leave us wholly in the dark, or leave us at full liberty to put any soft construction on them. Yet if men were honest, they might see, that doing what they *can* means nothing more, in plain English, than doing what they *will*; and if they are tried by the rule of doing what they *can* they must be all condemned, because they daily do such things as they need not and ought not, and leave undone other things which they might do and ought to do.

Here it may be noted, that what is called by plain men, *sincere obedience*, is entitled by the scribes a *remedial law*, or the *law of love*. They are all cankered branches from the same cankered stock; and their number is convenient. A troop looks well. They serve as pretty loop-holes, to play hide-and-seek in. No wonder that the foot is often shifted, when the ground is miry. Men will make a hundred *kind* of laws, but God has only *two*, the *law of works*, and the *law of faith*. Rom. iii 27. And what has been urged against sincere obedience, equally affects a remedial law, the law of love, and all their Jewish kindred. They must stand or fall together.

Lastly, sincere obedience, as a condition, can only terminate in perfect obedience. No middle point can be assigned, where you may stop. *No kind* of duty can be excluded, nor *any degree* of each kind. Thus you are unavoidably thrust upon a perfect law of works, and *become a debtor to do the whole law*. And if you dare not rest on a perfect obedience, unceasingly performed from the first day to the last, there is no other resting for you, but on Jesus Christ *alone*. He must be your all; and he will be your all, or nothing.

Thus I have gathered up my ends, respecting this matter; and I trust you see at length, that sincere obedience is nothing but a jack-o-lantern, dancing here and there and every where: no man could ever catch him, but thousands have been lost by following him. A cripple might as well rest upon his shadow for support, as your heart depend upon the phantom of sincere obedience.

Your mixed covenant is a mere bubble, blown up by the breath of pride. It has neither got a foot in heaven, nor a foot on earth, but is pendulous in the air, and rests upon a castle floating in the clouds, which threatens downfall and ruin every moment. Woe be to the man that is seated on it. Yet this castle, though the fabric of a vision, is the glory of a modern Christian; and, being built upon the clouds, has been reckoned safe from gun shot; but I trust the cloud is burst, and the phantom disappears.

(To be continued.)

ART. VI. On the Observance of Sacramental Fasts.

[The late Dr. Anderson in his pamphlet, entitled "A Word in Season," addressed, by way of letter, to the Rev. John Hemphill, speaking of the fruits of the union which gave rise to the Associate Reformed Church, has the following judicious remarks on the subject of Fasting as connected with the dispensation of the Lord's Supper.]

"A sixth fruit of the union formerly described, is an attack upon the practice of having humiliation days before and thanksgiving days after the celebration of the Lord's Supper. This attack appears to me highly

blameable, as it was unprovoked: nobody, at least as far as I know, having proposed that any addition should be made to the Directory for public worship, with regard to these days; nobody having represented the observance of them as essential or indeed properly any part of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Only as the public setting apart some time for those exercises, which are undoubtedly seasonable before and after the communion, was a mean of helping Christians in their private and personal exercise: so it was blameable in church members to neglect opportunities, when they were offered, of attending on such exercises. This was particularly plain with regard to the exercise of humiliation; which cannot be denied to be an appointed mean of promoting self-examination. It is not hereby meant, that persons ought to set apart some time for humiliation, whenever they examine themselves: for Christians are to examine themselves daily. But it is meant, that the dedicating of some time occasionally to that self-abasing exercise is an appointed mean of promoting the habit of self-examination; and therefore it will often be requisite that it should accompany such more formal and solemn essays to examine ourselves, as that which is enjoined in 1 Corinth. xi. 28. *Let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.* Nor does any instance occur of persons being justly charged with superstition, merely for going about one commanded duty before or after another; while the performance of each of them, separately considered, is agreeable to the Divine rule; and while it does not hinder the performance of any other duty. You yourself do not deny that a fast may be warrantably observed, when the condition of a congregation requires it, in connexion with the Lord's Supper. And who ever pleaded for the observation of a fast by a congregation, when the condition of the congregation did not require it? Who ever said or thought, that a congregation should fast, if they had no other ground or cause of fasting than their purpose of communicating the following sabbath? The truth is, the prospect of that near approach to God at his table is not properly, in itself, a cause of fasting or humiliation; but a solemn occasion that may well excite our attention to the causes of fasting both in our personal case and in that of the church. The near prospect of the communion must have this effect, if we allow, that our exercise and frame of mind in going to the Lord's table should be much the same with that which we ought to have in going out of time into eternity. In going to the Lord's table we ought to expect a lifting up by the free grace of God in Christ; but the scripture assures us, that humiliation before God usually goes before such a lifting up, Jam. iv. 13. The preaching of the word in which the apostle enjoins ministers to be *instant in season, out of season*, is necessary both before and after communicating, as an appointed mean of stirring up and encouraging church members to the exercises that are suitable on that occasion. Your distinction between ordinary and extraordinary ordinances or religious duties seems to have no foundation in the language of scripture or of the Westminster Assembly. According to the Larger Catechism all the ordinances of Christ are ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to his church the benefits of his mediation; among which ordinances is religious fasting. When it is said in the 21st chapter of the Confession that the reading and hearing of the word, the singing of Psalms and the receiving of the sacraments, are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God; besides religious oaths, vows, solemn fastings and thanksgivings upon special occasions; it is not meant that oaths, vows, fastings and thanksgivings are not parts of the ordinary worship of God, as some seem to have understood this article; but that they are parts of *that worship* distinguished by their occasional nature from those parts of it that are mentioned before. Great and notable judgments felt or feared, and the taking place of an extraordinary pro-

vocation are, no doubt, eminent occasions of fasting; but the seeking of some special or particular blessing, such as, deliverance from a great backwardness to the duty of self-examination, and such special direction of our exercise, as is necessary to avoid the special danger of unworthy communicating is also a just occasion for fasting. We have need to seek of the Lord a right way as earnestly in going to the Lord's table, as Ezra sought it in going from the river Ahava to Jerusalem. *Ezr. viii. 21.**

"Your scheme is certainly wrong and of a dangerous tendency, so far as it leads any to deny the peculiar solemnity of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, arising from the condescension of that near approach which a God in Christ makes to us in this ordinance, exhibiting and presenting himself to us in sensible signs; from the various exercises which are included in the duty of communicating; and from the mark of distinction that God has put upon this ordinance above all others, in the special charge to examine ourselves before we partake of it, and in the special denunciation of God's displeasure with the unworthy partakers.

"Farther, though it is desirable, that communicating were more frequent; yet the celebration of the Lord's Supper *every day* or *every Lord's day* appears to be neither consistent with the nature of this ordinance, nor warranted by scripture. Such a frequency seems inconsistent with the nature of this ordinance: for the outward act of eating and drinking in this ordinance are appointed to be sensible signs and means of exciting our attention to the spiritual things signified. Now, such a frequent use of these outward acts, as that now supposed, seems to lessen their aptitude to answer that end. The Lord's Supper, as to the very outward form of it, is a feast. But to receive it every day is to use it as a common meal. In speaking of the outward means of grace, is it not more agreeable to the scripture account of them, to consider the reading and hearing of the word and prayer as our common meals; and to consider the Lord's Supper as a feast? *The breaking of bread*, in *Acts ii. 42.*, is, no doubt, to be understood of the partaking of the Lord's Supper. But, in *v. 48*, what is said of the first Christians, *breaking bread from house to house*, may be understood of their society in their common repasts. And though we read of their *breaking bread*, which may be understood of the partaking of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week, *Acts xx. 7.*, yet it will not follow, that Christians then partook of that ordinance on *every* first day of the week. It is our Lord's revealed will that we should often shew forth his death in this ordinance; but he hath not said, that we should do so once in the week or once in the month. On the other hand, the import of the Divine command to communicate *often* and the communion which Christ allows his people in this ordinance are much disregarded by the practice of communicating only once in the year.

"I shall only add, that it seems very preposterous for you and others to display so much intemperate zeal on this unnecessary controversy, bringing the heavy charge of superstition and will-worship against some religious exercises, of which you dare not say, that either the *matter* or *manner* or *measure* is unscriptural; merely because Christians find them seasonable and useful to their souls before a sacramental occasion. Does not this look like infatuation for men to be so clamorous, where there is no cause; (for we have rather too little than too much of these exercises about sacraments and other occasions,) while they are in a great measure silent about a multitude of manifest errors and delusions which overspread the land?"

* *Jejunia et preces, fasting as well as prayer is mentioned in ecclesiastical history, among the exercises used by Christians in the second century in preparing for the communion. See Spanheim's Bagage.*

ART. VII. Miscellaneous Matters.

A SUGGESTION RESPECTING UNANIMITY.—That the visible church is lamentably divided into sects and different denominations, is a fact, which need not, which cannot, and which should not, be concealed. This fact should occasion serious reflection, and searchings of heart, among all the friends of the Redeemer's kingdom. There must be an evil cause somewhere existing, which has produced, and which is still keeping up these divisions; or else all God's people would be "like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind;" and would "with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." All "would speak the same thing; there would be no divisions among them, but they would be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Whatever then the evil cause may be, which is "letting" or hindering the approach of the glorious and happy period when this shall be the state of Zion; it should and must be taken out of the way, before we can hope to see it. But that such a period shall arrive, may be confidently and certainly expected. He, whose word shall stand when heaven and earth shall have passed away, hath said that "he will give his people ONE HEART AND ONE WAY;" that "the watchmen of Zion shall lift up the voice; with the voice TOGETHER shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion." That the hastening of this glorious period should be the earnest and fervent prayer of all who love Zion and her peace, must be evident; but that all other scriptural and rational means for bringing it about should also be pursued with the utmost diligence, can not be less obvious to every intelligent Christian. Both the individual and united effort of all the friends of Zion should be unremittingly directed to the attainment of so great and so desirable an event.

Deeply impressed with the importance of unanimity in the visible church, and feeling persuaded that a greater and more vigorous effort towards accomplishing it than has yet been made, or is now making, is the imperious duty of all the true Israel of God, the writer of this would suggest the propriety of holding meetings in different sections of the country, and in our cities, composed of ministers of the gospel and other friends of the peace and unanimity of Zion, for the purpose of discussing in a candid and brotherly and prayerful manner, the points of difference, whether in doctrine, worship, or government, which may exist between the denominations to which they severally belong; with the ulterior object kept constantly in view, in said discussions, of effecting, if possible, an entire unanimity of sentiment, and of thus preparing the way for a more united and unhampered effort for promoting the cause of God throughout the world. The plan here suggested, it is thought, would, if carried into execution, be an excellent means of bringing Christians of different denominations to see eye to eye. None can deny that the end in view is all-important. Every rational and scriptural means, therefore, should be used in order to obtain it.

If any consideration drawn from expediency or reason could add to the interest which the word of God gives to this subject, let the effect be duly considered which such a state of unanimity in the visible church would produce, in giving influence and strength to the church, and in giving effect to the efforts now making throughout the Christian world to suppress vice and immorality, to extend the knowledge of the Saviour among the heathen, to put to silence the gainsaying of the infidel. But let none say the object is chimerical, for He, whose words are all faithfulness and truth, has repeated his promise, *to give his people one heart and one way.* Jer. xxxii. 39.—Ezek. xi. 19. And that nations and kingdoms shall be gathered together [united] to serve the LORD. Ps. cii. 22. And he will surely bring it to pass.

UNANIMITAS.

THE ASSOCIATE SOCIETY OF INQUIRY.—The knowledge of church history relative to any period is an acquisition both interesting and important to every christian, and especially to those who are, or may be called, to maintain the cause of truth in a public capacity. But as events, nearer in point of time, and having an obvious bearing on the present situation of an individual, have greater influence in exciting his attention, and determining him to pursue any particular course of conduct; so the history of the church in our own times, is especially interesting and important to every friend of true religion. Influenced by such considerations, the students of the Associate Theological Seminary have formed themselves into a society of inquiry upon this subject. Their object (more particularly) is to obtain information respecting the state of the church in general, and especially of that branch with which they are more immediately connected: also, the demands and prospects for ministerial labor, both in our own and foreign countries. Now, as no systematic history, either of church or state, is ever written until some considerable time has elapsed, after the period to which it relates, so in order to gain their object it is necessary to have access to the religious papers and periodicals of the day, from which the condensed history of the church in our age is yet to be compiled. Accordingly they have established a reading room, into which they design collecting, as far as possible, all publications of this description containing pertinent and useful information. It is also their intention to carry on a correspondence with such persons as may feel an interest in the object of their association. In this they wish to be con-

sidered as concurring with the generous designs of the Associate Synod, in already furnishing a considerable library, and in still making exertions to increase the same for their advantage.

In most other theological institutions there are associations of a similar nature; and the extensive patronage received by them from a generous public encourages us to hope at least for a share, especially from the conductors of the periodical press. It is the duty of all, but especially of Zion's watchmen, or those who, incompetent and unworthy in themselves, are preparing to sustain this character, to be attentive and discern the signs of the times. But without those means of information to which we have referred, no one can discharge this important duty. In no other way can any one become accurately acquainted with the religious operations of the day, or the events of Providence which have a direct bearing upon the interests of Zion; and, therefore, he cannot determine whether the signs be good or bad; whether the cause of true piety be advancing or receding, in the controversy between truth and error; nor can he justify or condemn, in the presence of those who have inquired and learned, but must remain mute and inactive, through fear of exposure; and must not attempt to inform those who are desiring to be made acquainted with the subject, lest he may prejudice their minds against that which is good in favor of that which is evil. Such information is especially necessary at the present time, when infidelity and Antichrist are exciting their united forces to overthrow the cause of divine truth, the kingdom of our Lord, and the present and future happiness of our race.

As a society of inquiry we respectfully present these our views and wishes to a benevolent and Christian public.

Persons disposed to aid us in the prosecution of the above design, by favoring us with religious publications and other donations, will please direct—*The Associate Society of Inquiry, Canonsburg, Penn.* Signed, by order of Society,

JOSEPH MCKEE, President.

SAM'L DOUTHETT, Secretary.

ASSOCIATE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, Canonsburg, Dec. 16, 1835.

AN INQUIRY.—To what point should the Associate Church arrive, before it would be her duty to send ministers abroad?

J. M.

THE NEXT ASSEMBLY.—Much interest is felt in prospect of the meeting of the General Assembly. In various points of view it will be a meeting of thrilling importance, inasmuch as it will be called on to decide the destiny of the Presbyterian Church. The questions must be settled,—are the standards of the church authoritative or are they without authority? Have they a meaning or are they destitute of meaning? May they be received or may they be rejected at pleasure? If there be no difference between Calvinism and Pelagianism, let the Assembly so decide; if orthodoxy and heterodoxy are terms of equivalent import let the church know it through its supreme judicatory; or if it be true that the formula of doctrine adopted by the Presbyterian Church, may be legitimately interpreted as favoring two classes of sentiments directly opposite in their character, let the Assembly so pronounce, and then either abandon or remodel it. It would be unjust and cruel to keep the church in prolonged suspense; the next Assembly should unequivocally decide whether our standards shall be sustained in promoting *unity* in the faith, or whether they shall be perverted with impunity in maintaining a *diversity* in faith. Well may all creeds be scorned, if that of the Presbyterian Church shall be found to be so accommodating in its structure, as to be alike a shelter for truth and error. If it be a bond of union, let its character be asserted, but if it is destitute of all energy to effect this, let it be renounced as useless. The duty of the General Assembly appears to us to be obvious; they should vindicate and sustain the doctrines of the church, whoever may suffer inconvenience by their decision. A wrong act may produce incurable evils. Evasion or compromise will prove alike disastrous; present difficulties can be healed only by a firm and decided declaration, that no Presbyterian Minister can expect impunity in departing from the standards of the church, while he persists in remaining within its inclosures. Under this view who does not perceive the importance of an Assembly which will be regarded as the arbiter in these questions? If ever wisdom and discretion and courage were required, they will be required by that body; and if ever the church agonized in prayer, they should importunately and devoutly supplicate the source of all holy influences, to pour down upon that body, the wisdom which is profitable to direct, and the courage which will qualify them for arduous duty. We have not one private interest to secure, one ambitious feeling to be gratified, but we feel deeply solicitous that the Assembly should, in the face of all difficulties, stand forth for the truth. Let the history of the church in all past ages admonish them of the danger of tampering with error. Once countenanced it will proceed with unmeasured strides—each successive wave will rise higher, until the church is tossed and eventually ingulphed in the commotion.

The materials of this Assembly are not yet collected together, but the time is approaching when the Presbyteries will be called on to contribute their delegates. And

what shall be the character of these delegates? Shall they be orthodox, not merely in *name* but in *action*? The question should not be, who will go? but who shall be sent? The orthodox should be awake; they should select their wisest, their most experienced, and their staunchest men; who will not be afraid to fulfil the most difficult duties.

Every effort is and will be used to secure a New School Assembly; and if these efforts succeed in this one instance, every attempt hereafter on the part of the orthodox to secure the ascendancy will be futile. Now then is the favorable opportunity for exertion, and we trust that every minister and elder who may hear our voice will give immediate attention to secure an orthodox representation to the Assembly. We speak not as partisans, but as lovers of the doctrines and order of the Presbyterian Church.—*Presbyterian.*

ART. VIII. Religious Intelligence.

SOUTH AFRICA.—The population of the Cape colony amounts to 145,000. The government have established 24 schools, which contain 1,400 children. There are besides the domestic circulating schools, the parish Dutch schools, mission schools, higher schools, and Sunday and infant schools. The district of Albany, settled in 1820, has 8 villages, 11 places of worship, and 15 schools, at which one-fourth of the population are enjoying instruction. The societies which are engaged in diffusing the gospel in South Africa are the United Brethren, London, Wesleyan, Glasgow, French Protestant, American Board, Rhenish, Berlin, British and Foreign Bible, Christian Knowledge, and London Religious Tract. The Brethren have 6 stations, 33 missionaries, and 3,090 native converts. The London society has been 38 years in the field, has 23 stations, and 25 ordained missionaries. Southern Africa has frequently enjoyed the refreshing influences of the Holy Spirit. Industry, temperance, and comfort, are generally advancing. The Grahamstown Journal of Nov. 14, 1833, announces the legal establishment of the Christian Sabbath in their extensive tribe, by the Caffre chiefs, Pato, Kama and Congo. The Wesleyans have 10 stations and 12 missionaries. The other societies commenced their labors at a comparatively recent date. Printing presses are established at Cape Town, Grahamstown, Lattakoo, and among the Bechuanas. Parts of the Bible have been translated into three or four of the native dialects. The Hottentots, who were once classed with the ourang outang, have savings banks, lending libraries, temperance societies, etc.

In 1818, the London Missionary Society commenced a mission in Madagascar. Not less than 500 natives maintain a constant profession of religion in the midst of persecution and danger. Scholars 2,851. The New Testament and the Psalms have been translated into Madagasse and a large number of copies distributed. At Mr. Cameron's establishment, 700 natives are employed in manufactures. The difficulties attending the progress of the mission have scarcely been diminished, but the missionaries are much encouraged.

NORTH AFRICA.—Mr. Ewald of the London Jews' Society, after spending some time in Algiers has been obliged to return from the station, in consequence of difficulties thrown in his way by the local authorities. Rev. J. P. Oster was about to proceed to Algiers, but was informed that he would not be permitted to land there as a missionary. A popish missionary has been sent away from the country. Mr. Ewald is now laboring with considerable success in Tunis, maintaining daily discussion with Jews of all classes and distributing the Scriptures. The Arabs in North Africa submit with great reluctance to the French authorities.

NORTHERN ASIA.—The emperor of Russia has just established on the borders of China a school for the study of Chinese, in order to facilitate communication between Russia and China. Since the London mission in Siberia was established, 18 years have elapsed. The entire Bible has been translated into Mongolian, the native language of the present dynasty of China, and used by many of the Princes and Tartar officers. Application has been made from Peking for copies of the Mongolian Christian books. A number of Mongol-Buriat youths are under instruction.

EASTERN CHINA.—It has been proposed to enter China from the south through Siam and Laos, or by way of the Birman empire, or from the north through Siberia. Equal facilities for entering the country may be found by way of Bengal, through Nepaul or Bootan. Yet no part of the empire is so accessible as the coast, as has been proved by Gutzlaff's *six voyages*. The entire Bible is now possessed in the Chinese, the Mautchoo, and the Mongolian languages. The printing of Mr. Gutzlaff's Siamese New Testament is proceeding at Malacca. Mr. Medhurst of Batavia is preparing a revised edition of the Chinese Scriptures. The Bible is in the process of translation into the Fuhkeon dialect. Of the Chinese Repository, an ably conducted monthly, 900 copies are printed. A great number of Tracts have been put in circulation. From 10 to 15 natives have embraced the Gospel at Canton. The attention of the whole Christian world is turned extensively towards China.

SOUTHERN ASIA.—Satisfactory evidences are accumulating of the decay of Hindooism. The regulations of the East India Company for the abolition of the pilgrim tax, will have a beneficial influence in weakening the Hindoo superstition. Suttee and infanticide have been abolished, though the latter prevails to some extent in Cutch and Gezerat. There is an increasing persuasion among the Brahmins that the British must prevail, and the power of the Ganges come to an end. The number of ordained American and European missionaries in India and Ceylon is about *one hundred and forty*. Compared with the extent of country, the number of stations is small, but inroads have been made on every portion of the great empire of darkness, from the Himmaleh mountains to Cape Comorin, and from Bombay to Birmah.

UNITED STATES.—We think there is an increasing attention paid to the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, as they have been held by the great body of the New-England churches from the beginning. For ourselves, we have an increasing attachment to the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and we cannot but rejoice to find that many clergymen are reviving the venerable custom of catechising the children of their parishes from this excellent manual. We trust also that clergymen are beginning to feel more and more the importance of bringing out the great truths of redemption, irrespective of controversy, in the manner that they were handled in the 17th century by Flavel, Baxter, Bates, Leighton and Howe.

EUROPE.—We have only space to say, that political affairs in Portugal and Spain, the increasing Christian and missionary spirit in France, Switzerland, and Germany, the noble philanthropic efforts of our brethren in Great Britain, the interest in some of the continental countries in education, and many things in the condition of the Roman Catholics furnish occasion for devout reflection and gratitude.—*Boston Recorder*.

DECLINE OF POPERY.—The following remarks on the present state and prospects of Popery in different countries in Europe, are from the London Christian Observer for November.

“Upon the continent of Europe we find Popery every where crippled ; its civil power is nodding to its downfall : and even in Spain itself, one of its strongest fortresses, while Don Carlos is attempting for political purposes to concentrate its ancient energies, the Queen's ministers have secularized its revenues, abolished its monastic institutions, and left it an enfeebled victim, bleeding beneath the sword of the civil magistrate. Nay, in Ireland itself Popery is decidedly upon the decline ; to testify which, we may adduce a most competent witness in Mr. Naangle of Achill, who, in a recent letter to Dr. M'Hale, says : “In reference to the Bishop of London's statement concerning the increase of Protestantism in Ireland, I must testify, even at the hazard of again exciting your indignation, that it quite accords with my own experience. I have travelled much through this province ; and, in every parish, I have found among the most exemplary of the Protestants a greater or less number of persons who had been educated in the Church of Rome, and lately abandoned its communion. Of ten individuals, who have from time to time assisted me in the spiritual work of this mission as readers or schoolmasters, eight were persons of this description ; all (and some of them with large families) had come out from Popery. This, sir, I think, looks like an increase of the Protestant religion in Ireland ; and in the waning of that sacredness which once encircled the (Romish) priesthood—in the loud and almost universal complaints of their avarice and rapacity—in the growing disgust which recent displays of their arrogance and tyranny have engendered in the Roman Catholic aristocracy—in the bold and wide-spread testimony which one (Romish) priest has borne against the innovations in doctrine, and the monstrous impurities in practice, of his brethren—in the manly separation of other priests from the Roman church—and, as the result of all these combined causes, in the growing suspicion that Popery may be false, and that Protestantism may be true ; and the growing persuasion that the Bible is the criterion by which the merits of conflicting opinions must be tried—in all these points I discover the germ of a still greater growth of Protestantism in this country.” In England, Roman Catholic chapels have sprung up rapidly, but we are far from thinking that they furnish a true test of the hold of Popery upon the public mind. They have risen under peculiar circumstances ; but we do not believe that Popery will become deeply rooted in the soil ; nay, it is even possible that this proximity to Protestantism will in the issue tend to subvert it. We have heard already the language which Dr. Murray and Mr. O'Connell feel it necessary to employ ; and though this spirit of moderation, this recognition of Protestants as “beloved fellow-christians,” should be only a weapon of policy, yet it may have a powerful effect upon the Roman Catholic laity, who have been kept together hitherto by being taught that theirs was the only Christian church, and that they ought to anathematize and labor to exterminate every trace of Protestantism. When their priesthood are forced to descend from this high ground, and to break down the first barrier, the laity will be very apt to overleap the mound, and look abroad upon the world for themselves, and form their own conclusions.”

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NOTICE.

THE subscriber has purchased, together with the *Monitor*, all its outstanding subscription dues, which amount to about \$2,400, and he hopes he may not be allowed to suffer in his pecuniary interests by the non-payment of the same. He will esteem it as a special favor to have remittances made as soon as possible, that he may be able to meet his engagements. It is hoped that those acting as agents will give attention to this matter.—All letters and communications must be addressed to the subscriber and be *post paid*, unless when enclosing money or the names of new subscribers, or when relating *immediately* to the interests of the *Monitor*.—Former agents are humbly requested to continue their agency. In the subscriber's absence, persons visiting the city can transact business in relation to the *Monitor*, by calling on Mr. ANDREW WHITE, at the printing office, No. 71 State-street.

JAMES MARTIN.

N. B. It is proposed, if our subscription list will warrant it, to add one half to the present size of the *Monitor*, after Vol. XII is completed. It is, therefore, necessary that the names of new subscribers be forwarded to us as soon as possible, that we may make our arrangements accordingly.

J. M.

AGENTS.

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In addition to the ministers and itinerating preachers of the Associate Church, who are authorized to receive subscriptions and money, and give receipts, the following persons are authorized to act as agents:

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